





John Beardmore,

Uplands, Hants.

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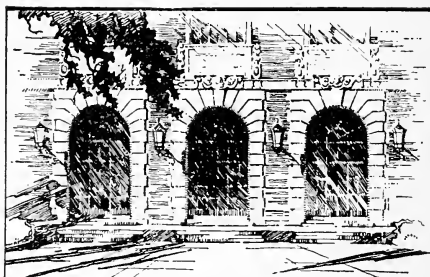
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John Heardmore
90 Dean Street
Finsbury Square

THE
PORT ADMIRAL;

A TALE OF THE WAR.

VOL. I.

PREPARING FOR PUBLICATION,

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

WINDSOR;

A ROMANCE OF ROYALTY.

ALSO,

THE SECOND BOOK

OF

THE LAUREAD.

THE
PORT ADMIRAL;

A TALE OF THE WAR.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
“CAVENDISH.”

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
COCHRANE AND M'CRONE,
11, WATERLOO PLACE, PALL MALL.

1833.

B. "OH, GODS! YE GODS MUST I ENDURE ALL THIS?"

C. "'ALL THIS?' AYE MORE: FRET TILL YOUR PROUD HEART BREAK,
GO SHOW YOUR SLAVES HOW CHOLERIC YOU ARE, AND MAKE YOUR
BONDSMEN TREMBLE. MUST I BUDGE—MUST I OBSERVE YOU! MUST
I STAND AND CROUCH UNDER YOUR TESTY HUMOUR? BY THE GODS
YOU SHALL DIJEST THE VENOM OF YOUR SPLEEN THOUGH IT DO SPLIT
YOU; FOR, FROM THIS DAY FORTH, I'LL USE YOU FOR MY MIRTH,
YEA, FOR MY LAUGHTER WHEN YOU ARE WASPISH. * *

* * * * *

* WERE I BRUTUS, OR BRUTUS ANTHONY, THERE WERE AN
ANTHONY SHOULD RUFFLE UP YOUR SPIRITS AND MOVE THE STONES
OF ROME TO RISE AND MUTINY."

JULIUS CÆSAR.

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DEDICATION.

TO

ADMIRAL SIR WILLIAM ———,

G. C. B.

ETC. ETC. ETC.

SENIOR UNITED SERVICE CLUB,

May, 1832.

MY DEAR SIR WILLIAM,

I HAVE to return you many thanks for your packet of the third instant, which was delivered to me in person by your little friend, whom I have been fortunate enough to serve in the manner you had pointed out. These are hard times in our service for youngsters of mere merit, but as he seems to know the value of perseverance he will, without doubt, succeed.

I had judged rightly, when I thought that in applying to you for some story on which to ground a naval tale, I had gone to the fountain-head: that which you have sent to me forms a wild and singular narrative, the perusal of which has given me great pleasure, though I must be

permitted to share in your grief, that the narrator has not been spared to us, that he might work up the picture, to the finishing of which I am comparatively so unequal.

Believe me, dear Sir William, I am exceedingly gratified by your request, that my idle pages should be dedicated to yourself; more especially as they will contain a relation—however humble—of many scenes which we have together witnessed, joys we have equally shared, and dangers we have mutually encountered. Alas! when the evening of life arrives to sober and to sadden us, there are few delights left us more exquisite than the remembrances of the morning that has vanished; may we not be likened to those lonely wanderers upon the sea shore who view the setting of an autumnal sun, and shivering in the night breeze, recall with regret the warmth afforded to them by the genial rays of noon.

You say that for many years you have not read the MS. now sent to me. In that case I should think that you must have forgotten its contents. I suppose, however, I need scarcely remind you, that the character of the Port Admiral can be drawn from no other than yourself; though I must confess that you have not had full justice

done to you in the portrait. It is true that Sir Richard possesses all your kindness, generosity, and excellence of heart, but in the semblance I am unable to find those finished touches of polish and breeding so winning in the original. As for Tarpaulin you cannot fail to have recognized the honest old rogue at a glance; his person, the lady of his heart, and his lips, and his never-sufficiently-to-be-repeated story, immediately betray the identity. Your lamented friend was fortunate in possessing such a study. Charles Græme is also, to the best of my recollection, a faithful sketch, and we, who during his existence were insensible neither to his merit nor his afflictions, cannot feel unwilling to afford a tear to the memory of one, in whom tyranny and the inexplicable course of circumstances caused virtue to be quenched in crime, and abilities to be conducive only to destruction. With regard to Lady Sapphira, and her two friends, the Captain and Major, I shall take the liberty of reducing their parts to ones of less prominence in this little drama, since the world which now professes and maintains an utter indifference to the sentiments of poetry, is, if I may judge from the clever but neglected productions of contemporary writers, still less alive

to the broad conceptions of humour, or a feeling for the ludicrous. This, I must think, is owing to an over refinement, which while it has caused a stricter observance of many follies, has brought society to a lower ebb of moral feeling than that at which it found it. As, however, it is equally as vain to write in opposition to the tide of public opinion, as to swim against the current of the stream, you must not be surprised if you occasionally find my honest "Tars" conversing in a strain somewhat above their condition. To a certain extent I shall do this in deference to the public voice, though against my own judgment, farther, however, I shall not go, even though some literary fop, should—in his eager wish to be mistaken for a man of breeding—demand that human nature be represented somewhat finer than its Maker created it: such critical creatures however do afford us food for laughter, if convertible to no other use. My young friend I——e will continue to afford me his assistance, so do not think me demented when you read all his fine love-scenes, but set them down to the right person. I wanted to dispense with as many as possible, but he tells me that "the poetry of the passion," as he terms it, is all that makes life bearable. There

was a time, Sir William, when we also thought—but Bah!—what can a disappointed old bachelor have to say of the passion?—one whose first love jilted him, and whose last obtained iniquitously heavy damages. By the by, if any nice little anecdotes should occur to you, write and give them to me. I shall not be at liberty to look at the MS. for three months, and shall take as many more to get it ready for sea. You will excuse all blots and blunders, when I tell you that old Buzzey—that Admiral of the Yellow Squadron—is at my elbow purring over *The Times*, in tones distinctly audible to every soul within the room—himself excepted.

Thanking you once more, believe me ever to remain, my dear Sir William,

Your affectionate old messmate,



**THE
PORT ADMIRAL.**



THE PORT ADMIRAL,

A TALE OF THE WAR.

CHAPTER I.

“ I am an enemy to slavery in any shape, under whatever name it may be disguised, and my blood boils when I contemplate the oppressions which are passed by under another designation.—Is not a pressed man a slave to the will of a despot?”

LETTER OF VICE ADMIRAL SIR EDWARD CODRINGTON.

PERHAPS, dear Reader, you have been in India? If so, you have only to recall to your mind's eye the beautiful view presented by the harbour of Bombay on a fine day, and you will at once be present at the spot whence this our history first takes its rise.

But then, again, dear Reader, on the other hand, perhaps you have *not* been in India, and may never yet have experienced the piquant delights attendant on a passage through the tremendous surf thundering on those eastern shores? Perhaps

you have yet to indulge in the luxury of a palanquin, in which may-be a cobra di capella has taken the liberty of nestling, while the boys have laid it upon the ground, in waiting for its master, before the bungalow of Major Ramrod, whose wife retails her scandal with more "tact" than any lady in the regiment? Perhaps, dear Reader, the dull monotony of your life has *not* yet been broken by the charming variety of being stung to madness by mosquitos, notwithstanding that your gauze curtains have been most carefully fanned and closed ever since four o'clock.— Perhaps, I say, your precarious existence has never been preserved by the tormenting prophylactic of "the prickly heart," which makes a martyrdom of the vitality it prolongs? Perhaps, also,—if you are a gentleman—you have never felt the exquisite thrill of putting on your boots somewhat suddenly and finding one of them already tenanted by a scorpion, who thrusts his sting into your foot without loss of time, to show that he is "at home"! May-be, likewise, you are yet ignorant of the felicity of taking a walk in your garden with some dear, rich old relative, whose will proclaims you heir, and seeing him suddenly drop

down in the agonies of death at your feet, a victim to the fearfully quick venom of the cobra Manille, one of which the old gentleman has inadvertently roused as he passed along ;—it is also not impossible that you may still be dead to the pleasing excitement of having your hepatic economy so far deranged as to murder your digestion, and saffronize your countenance,—in short, you may not have been in India. Imagine then, since the rules and arts of the mystery of writing forbid a minute description of any spot where but a trifling part will be played,—imagine then, I say, a noble harbour in an eastern port, in which, among a vast variety of shipping, there lies conspicuous a seventy-four, and allow your fancy to place you on her poop, where, in a miserable hutch, a young officer was now placed in irons.

“Where are you going you long selvigee scoundrel?” bawled the officer of the watch across the deck, addressing a very tall stout seaman, whose features presented a singular mixture of ferocity and good-nature, since with his eyebrows contracted into a forbidding frown he always carried a smile around his mouth.

“Why, ye see, sir, I’m just a-going aft for Will

Tucket, who's cook o' the mess to-day, to point the splicing of the aftermast fall o' the first cutter.— It's just been turned in afresh ye see, sir, and the nettles are hanging about it as raw as a cat's tail stroked again the grain."

Such a defence and simile proved too much for the lieutenant, and Collins (the man's name) was allowed to ascend. The first cutter was hoisted up on the larboard quarter (or side of the poop), and the seaman having climbed the bulwark, descended into the mizen chains outside. Hidden from the sight of the officer of the watch, he now paused, and instead of getting into the boat, began to creep carefully along towards the aftermost port-hole by one of the mouldings, where, had he lost his footing, he must have been precipitated into the sea below.

Having gained the outside of the port and crouched down beneath the projecting carronade, he thrust his long arm within, to arouse the attention of the prisoner before mentioned; as his hutch just included the gun within its bounds. "Mr. * * *," whispered the seaman, once or twice.

"Who's there?" demanded the prisoner, startled from an uneasy nap.

“Hush, your honour, for your life,—it’s only me, your honour,—Collins—ye must speak in a whisper; I couldn’t abide to see your honour starving up here on sivin banyan days in the week, as it may be,—so I took the liberty—I ask your honour’s pardon, I hope ye won’t be offended—of bringing ye up a little mess o’ beef and a drop of grog,” pulling forth a small bundle from his bosom, “for that water and weevily biskit that they’ve been sarving out to ye’s enough to pison a midshipman’s duck, let alone a Christian, and every one knows that the other creatur is the longest lived quadrupid as ever stepped ’twixt plank and carline.”

“No, no, Collins, my old boy,” interrupted the young officer, in an equally low tone, “I cannot take this,—though my obligations are still as great to you. Take it back, that’s a good fellow, and eat it yourself. The king, God bless him! does not allow any of us too much on which to starve, as you call it. Take it back, Collins. I got into this scrape alone—I will bear it unaided, and unaided escape from it. Take it back, sir.”

“Vast heaving, Sir, it’s not I, old Collins, ’ll do that—ye may heave it overboard if ye like, but I

scorn the rations since you won't have.—Come, your honour, after all it is but bobbing twice at a cherry.—Hark!—there sir, as I live, there's the leaftenant o' the watch singing out my name—I shall be in for it; quick,—lay hold of it your honour—that's the beef, and this case contains the grog. For the sake o' Tim Collins take the most possible care o' that grog case,—I set more store by that than any other part o' my living body, and that's no flea-bite. Cause ye see—Hark! there he calls again—make haste and scoff it your honour. I wish one of that fellow's teeth—asking his pardon—would fall and choke his hatchway, he wouldn't be so fond of calling names, and no harm to him;” and, without an instant's further delay, the generous hearted seaman moved off to answer the lieutenant of the watch, while the young officer, finding that the provisions were left upon his hands, fulfilled the request of their kind donor, and, coarse as the meat was, he enjoyed it as a luxury which he had not known for days.

The hour was fast approaching noon. The seventy-four's white sails furled in as little bulk as possible, the exact symmetry and right-angles

of her gigantic spars, the taut (tight) ropes and freshly set-up shrouds and ratlines, as well as the polished monkey-tails, carronade-screws, brass belaying pins, binnacle-plates, and other metal ornaments, all bespoke the prevalence of the strictest naval discipline on board. Indeed, had any proof been wanting to corroborate the above symptoms, it would have been found in the savage and martinet-like features of the Captain, then waiting at the gangway to receive the Admiral on board; the servile and spiritless looks of his surrounding officers, the scowl of hatred and contempt curling around the lips of the boatswain who piped the side, the scared and fear-stricken appearance of the two men who hurriedly essayed to finish the sweeping of the quarter-deck, and make their escape forward before the Admiral came up the side, and lastly in the sullen and portentous silence that seemed to hang over the whole ship; broken in upon by the suppressed whisperings of the junior officers, and the tossing-in of the oars below as the barge swept up alongside. That noise had ceased, to be succeeded by a second pipe, in the midst of which entered the Admiral. Simultaneously every hat was lifted,

the Captain, with his head uncovered, advanced a step forward and bowed, but without grace. Planting his feet firmly on the gangway, his superior paused for a moment, eyed with a severe and scrutinizing glance the officers around, slowly raised the point of his sheathed sword towards his gold-laced hat, and bending stiffly to his second-in-command, as much as to say, follow me, walked with a firm step towards the poop.

Nature is but too frequently overcome by art, and many have lost, in assumed and fictitious characters, those which were originally and naturally their own. Whether this had been the case to its fullest extent with the flag-officer who has just been introduced to the reader,—and to whom I shall forbear giving any name, for reasons of mine own,—matters little,—but so long had he trained his features to their wonted cast of expression, that now, when the fire of youth began to subside, they exhibited little more than pride, austerity, and choler. Now and then, it was true, a transitory gleam of sunshine shot across, and hinted that the soul within was yet redeemed by some few noble traits; but this was rarely seen.

“You are now ready for sea, of course?” he

remarked to the captain, interrupting the silence as he reached the break of the poop, and turned to walk forward once more.

“No, not quite, sir, I fear,” returned the latter, with some hesitation, looking rather confused.

“Not ready? Captain Grummet! How is this, sir? It is four days since I told you that my wishes were to sail at once, and that you would use all possible despatch!”

“I have done so, Admiral. But you must remember that this sudden change in our destination required many alterations. We have been unceasingly busy till to-day, and so I should have continued up to this moment; but, immediately after breakfast, the master shipwright, with two of his foremen, came off from the shore, and having, unknown to me, gone round the ship with the carpenter, to examine what defects stood in need of repair, he has reported her to be altogether unfit to encounter the voyage home; and that, if not surveyed and condemned now, she will go down in the next squall.”

“Sir, he is an infernal stupid old fool! and deserves to have his black hide visited with the cat!”—broke forth the Admiral in a passion;

"What does *he* know about the defects of my ship? She is old, it is true,—so am I; but *I* can do my duty yet, sir, and, by G—, *I* will, and so shall *she*: after carrying me through storm and breeze, wreck and battle, for many a long day, she's not to be broken up for an old hulk in this way." "But, Sir"—"Don't answer me, Captain Grummet. Who dared to admit him? Who dared to shew the prying black rascal round my ship without my especial knowledge? Both of us ought to have been present at a survey of this importance."

Seeing that the Admiral was in one of his fits of ire, the captain, to whom long cringing had taught submission, made no direct reply; but, turning towards the opposite side of the quarter-deck, where stood the mate of the watch, he said, "Mr. Stevens!"

"Sir?" replied the latter, starting at the summons, and respectfully touching his hat.

"Who had the watch when the master shipwright came on board?"

"I had, sir."

"Then come here." With a trembling step the young officer obeyed the summons, which

he knew by experience boded nothing pleasant.

"Tell me, sir," began the Admiral, in a menacing tone of voice, "did you permit the master shipwright to come on board to survey my ship, without reporting it to the first lieutenant?" The midshipman hesitated.—"He asked to see the carpenter, sir, and having sent for Mr. Græme, he seemed to consider it all right, and I allowed them to go below together."

"'All right,' sir? You good-for-nothing idle hound! I'll teach you to slur over your duty in this manner. Captain Grummet, send him to the foretop-mast-head for four hours," violently returned the Admiral, assuming a dignity in the latter part of his speech which he had totally violated by his language at the commencement. Without waiting for his sentence of punishment to be so courteously conveyed through a third person, the unfortunate culprit walked forward to take his uneasy and precarious seat.

"Captain Grummet, send the carpenter to me directly."

"Aye, aye, sir. Boy, tell Mr. Græme that the Admiral waits for him upon the quarter-deck."—

““ *Waits for him,*’ Captain Grummet?” fiercely interrupted the Admiral; “tell him no such thing; but order *him* to *wait* upon *the Admiral*.” The message was corrected according to this order, and in a few minutes the warrant officer appeared before them. He was a stout built, powerful, athletic man, who, to use his own words, stood “six feet two without his shoes.” It was easy to see, from the firm step, free and possessed manner, and the bold daring glance of his eye, which returned that of his superior without the slightest abashment, that, however he might have acquired some of the more superficial habits of a sailor, the sea was not the element on which he had been bred, or his manners and his habits formed. His age scarcely appeared to exceed thirty. His high cheek-bone and lank features bespoke the Scotchman, while the sharp quick eye and voluble utterance hinted at the admixture of Irish blood within his veins. Such was, indeed, his origin, his father having quitted the somewhat sterile though redundant land of cakes, and married a daughter of the land of broils. Their only child, following his example, had domesticated himself at the Cove of Cork, where his dexterity in the

trade he had adopted soon rendered him a thriving man. A long life of utility and happiness appeared before him, until, in an evil hour, it pleased certain of his Majesty's officers to attack, overpower, and impress him into his Majesty's service. They knew he left behind him a cherished partner and two young infants, dependent on his labours for support; but he was doomed never more to see them. His conquerors' hearts were steeled, more adamant than their gyves, and within twenty-four hours after his capture, the ship was bearing him away to cross the vast Atlantic. From that hour I need not surely describe his character:—a captive against his will, determined to be free, on the first opportunity that offered an escape, and the retaliation of his wrongs. Dreadful in its consequences was that retaliation doomed to be, as the reader will shortly learn. Through that one inhuman act, though sanctioned by the law of the land, how much of misery was caused,—of blood was shed,—and crime committed!

In Græme's education there had been an error,—if an error it may be called, though I can scarcely admit it,—common among the Scotch;—

it was altogether above the walk of life in which he had been born. In his disposition were united all that admirable caution, wariness, and indomitable spirit of perseverance natural to our northern neighbours, with the fearlessness and fiery daring which make seven millions of Irish the dread and—as they would say—the curse of all English ministers. From all these circumstances the reader will readily comprehend that Græme was a dangerous character. He had long nursed the black spot within his breast, and many a bitter indignity did discipline heap upon it, as fuel to fire. Caution led him so far to temper his passions, that after his first bitter ebullitions were over, he applied himself unweariedly to his duty for two reasons: first, to lull the suspicions of his oppressors, and throw them off their guard; and next, with the faint and distant hope that all might yet be well,—that he might once more meet the wife of his bosom, and clasp his children to his heart; when any pension or pay that he might have earned from government by his labours would, by additional comfort, prove a recompense to him for all the hardships and sufferings of the present moment. But when

he thought upon that wife, her unprotected youth, and the temptations to which her unusual beauty exposed her, the warmth of heart which endeared to him the woman with whom two years of matrimonial life had been passed as one continuous day of joy,—when this came rushing on his mind, together with the freezing thought that starvation might be her lot, or worse,—that sin or crime might plant a curse upon her name,—his sturdy frame shook beneath the powerful emotions that oppressed it, like the giant of the forest beneath the breath of the whirlwind. Then came the heavenly lull of hope, and he applied himself yet more unremittingly to his duty, as a solace from thought and a path to freedom.

Of abilities he possessed more than an ordinary share, and these, within two years, aided by his perseverance, had procured for him a carpenter's warrant. He had passed through several ships, but in each he had won, by his quiet inoffensive habits, the love of all his inferiors; while his taciturnity and superiority of diction made them look up to him with respect, as one above themselves. Often had he written to his wife; never had he received the least tidings of her. Those

seamen, whom he met as coming from the Cove of Cork, declared there was no such a resident there. At last he learned from a soldier, who had embarked there, that shortly after his impressment, all her kith and kin being dead, including his parents, she had left the place in the greatest poverty and distress, to go no one knew whither. Many a furrow did this heart-rending intelligence plough in his forehead, many a year of his life did it seem likely to eat away ; but he checked the struggling gasp, when his informant added, “though her whisht beautiful little face was still the remark of her neighbours, there wasn’t an honester girl or a kinder heart in the island.”

He had often begged permission to go home ; but unhappily “he was too good a hand, he could not be spared.” “Almighty God !” responded the maddened man to himself. “Must I be led, by the conduct of my fellow-creatures, to curse the very bounties which Thy hand hath bestowed ! Make me a complete fool,—an idiot ; strike me with pestilence, disease—wither my frame—let me become an outcast, of no use to these tyrants ; but conduct me to support the undeserved afflic-

tions of those whom my heart loves dearer than itself! 'too good!'—I will become a very fiend incarnate!"

I have dwelt somewhat minutely, perhaps, on this character, for he will shortly act a prominent part. Poor man! A tear drops upon my pen when I reflect that I am not drawing upon imagination for his sorrows; for Truth has ineffaceably stamped and recorded them as her own.

At last, then, he had attained that rank to which he had long aspired; he had become a warrant officer, and this would insure him a half-pay to succour his distressed partner, if he should be fortunate enough to find her, and leave her a pension if ever she became a widow.

Shortly after this period he was appointed to the Admiral's ship, and she,—oh, happy climax!—was now suddenly ordered home. Joy well nigh bewildered him, and imagination filled up a prospect in futurity bright as aught that earth can boast.

We now return to the scene from which this explanation has necessarily led us, gentle Reader.

"I believe you sent for me, sir?" he inquired, looking towards the captain.

“It was I who sent for you, sir,” interrupted the Admiral. “Did you show the native master shipwright round my ship?”

“Why he told me, sir, that he had been sent off on duty to ascertain our defects.—”

“Answer me, sir, directly in a straight-forward manner, and don’t stand there prevaricating, like a cursed cunning knave as you are. Did you do it?”

“Under an impression that it was my duty,” firmly returned Græme, while an angry flush passed over his countenance at the wanton insult, “I did show the master shipwright round the decks; but, Admiral, no motive of knavery was connected with my doing so, and you must know it is a term of reproach which none of my actions have deserved.”

The Admiral bit his lip, and, suppressing his rage as well as possible, demanded, “And to whom, sir, did you apply for permission to do this?”

There was a pause. “I was not aware, Admiral, that it was a matter of sufficient importance. I hope, sir, I have not overstepped my instructions. I took him below on my own responsibility. If I have done wrong,—”

"*If* you have done wrong!" impatiently interrupted the choleric old man, stamping furiously on the deck, and accompanying the action with a volley of oaths,—“You doubt, do you, after taking it on your own responsibility? Ecod, you shall soon learn. I have long marked you for an insolent scoundrel, and I'll teach you to rely less on your own cunning and more on your obedience. Captain Grummet, send instantly for your clerk, let him disrate this Græme from his warrant, and put him among the carpenter's crew. Let it be done, I say, at once.”

I was a mute spectator of the scene; I cannot banish from remembrance the phrensied look of the unfortunate man as this arbitrary sentence fell on his ear. Scarcely did he seem to comprehend that in this one stroke the hopes and toils of years had been rendered vain and futile,—scattered to the winds. A visible tremor crept over his frame, the colour sank from his hueless cheek, the eye quivered, and his lips seemed involuntarily to open with intense and unutterable agony. Even the stern old Admiral seemed struck with the change,—but only for a moment,—and then his eye, satiated with scenes of woe and power,

seemed to gloat upon the hard-wrung hands and stricken countenance of his victim. Græme slowly gazed around him, as if gathering a proper comprehension of his situation,—he looked up, and his eyes, though bloodshot, were dry; his glance then fell on the poop, and beheld the young officer (with the introduction of whom this chapter opened) sitting with his legs in irons and his countenance indicating all the compassion which he felt for the bereaved husband and parent.

“Poor fellow-sufferer!” said the carpenter to himself. “It is but too true, we are altogether within their grasp, there is no alternative but submission.” Then, turning to the Admiral, in a supplicating tone of voice he continued; “For the sake of mercy tell me, Sir, I implore you, did I hear you aright?”

“‘Right,’ quite right! you are disgraced for neglect of duty and insolence, and henceforth will hold a place on the ship’s books as one of the carpenter’s crew.”

“For the love of heaven, Admiral ——, recall your sentence,” cried the carpenter, dropping on one knee, and trying in vain to take the hand of his superior, which was haughtily withdrawn from

him. "As you hope to be saved from eternal perdition hereafter, do not carry it into execution. I have done wrong you say! I will not doubt your word, but do consider, sir, that it was without intent, and punish me personally as you will,—I shall not flinch, however severely it be done,—the lash,—aye, even the pain and disgrace of that, my back shall bear, and thankfully, so you forego your present intent; the first will hurt the offender, but the last, the last, oh! Heaven, will starve my helpless wife—my innocent children."

"Ha!" returned the Admiral, with a sardonic curl of the lip that might better have become a demon than a man, "have I at last found out the way to crush your insolence? Egad then, it shall be done; there are enough, and to spare, of your mutinous kin aboard this ship,—you shall serve as an example to them. As to the cat, the lash as you call it,—take care it does not visit your back yet, as well as your being disgraced now. You might have known, before you dared my punishment, that I never yet recall my word. Your wife and children!! what are they to me?" While the contemptuous and loud tone of voice in which these inhuman words were uttered was

yet ringing in the ears of all around, the Admiral turned haughtily from the suppliant, to whom, as well as the captain, he motioned to follow him, and descended hastily to the main deck, with a countenance that expressed the storm to be only as yet half over-past.

“He says truly,” murmured Græme, as the tyrant strode away, leaving him in the same kneeling position, unconscious of all around save his own woe;—“he says truly. What are my famishing wife and children to him,—to me alone they constitute existence! and oh! great God! what now am I?” Convulsive throes shook his rude but powerful and well made form, memory and passion were at deadly strife within.

Stepping up to him, I laid my hand upon his shoulder. “Græme, my good man, get up;”—he raised his glance to my face, but his look was wild and vacant, he understood not what I said. “Get up, my good fellow,” I repeated, “the Admiral motioned for you to follow him; he is gone to see the native shipwright on the main-deck, follow him quickly, this affair may yet be explained when his passion is over, and I myself will do all I can to save your warrant.” He arose,

looked at me half doubtingly, and shook his head. He uttered not one word of thanks,—he could not,—but, taking my fingers within his palm with a grateful grasp, there fell upon my hand a tear,—the first, the last returning sensibility allowed to flow, and for any kindness which it was ever in my power to render him that tear repaid me, and in full.

CHAPTER II.

Auld fules aye gang their wilfu' gate,
The young are no that carefu';
Tho' these will tak advice when late,
A greybeard fule is fearfu'.

OLD SONG.

SUBDUING his emotions, as best he might, he descended to the main-deck and found the Admiral, captain, first-lieutenant, one or two of the subordinate officers, and several of the ship's crew, gathered around three natives, who, from their dress and appearance, seemed to belong to the Parsees; which peculiar class in India, as my reader may already know, includes almost all the artisans. It is by these men that those superb ships are built which constantly arrive in this country. Their names are remarkable as generally terminating in *agee*; those of the three present were, Jumsagee, master shipwright, and Jabbersagee, and Bobsagee.

his foreman. They were all of the middle height, and sparely made. Jumsagee, who spoke broken English tolerably well, had a good natured countenance, the others appeared more savage; he was their spokesman, and they his supporters: thus, to whatever he said, they swore, in their native tongue. "Talk to me, you yellow-coloured rascal, of my ship's timbers being loose and rotten," loudly and vehemently exclaimed the Admiral, with threatening gesticulations, to Jumsagee, "how should you know? You haven't seen them."

"No, massa, I no see them."

"Well then, you stupid old fool, I tell you again, you can know nothing about it."

"I no stupid fool, Massa Amiral!—tell you dat,—but dis I tell you, dis ship no fit even go trading up long a country; she make great leak, lying still, doing nothing;—you greater fool than I den, who go over big seas, where you call Inglan in flam-flam like dis.—Eh, Bobsagee?" This important personage being thus appealed to, in spite of the admiral's frowns bowed his head in acquiescence, with great reverence, as well as asserting the same by word of mouth.

"Dere, Massa Amiral, you see what Bobsagee

say.—Dis ship thirty year old—been in big battles—big wind—on big rock—no dock for ten year! Massa Amiral, suppose you knock a caulky iron on her ben, it go into head! rotten, rotten!—No say your ship no good ship, berry good ship ten year go, not now; suppose you go to sea in dis ship, it be de bottom de sea, not de top.—Eh, Jabbersagee?” Jabbersagee bowed.

“Curse your black hides, you impertinent scoundrels, you jumbling set of beggars;” then turning to his captain, “Is not an admiral who’s had a ship under his command for many years to know whether she’s trustworthy or not? I tell you, I don’t care a straw for these fellows’ paltry fears and opinions, this ship has carried me through thick and thin, and I’ll take her home in spite of you all—a pack of swindling shipwrights;—not a penny shall they make by breaking up the old——’s timbers: I’ll take her into port in England, and if all other ways fail, by G—d, she shall sail without her bottom.”

“Ah Massa Amiral, all bery well now, you get in fine passion at poor Jumsagee, but when the big wind come he berry good man, so Bobsagee and Jabbersagee! Suppose you *will* sail at de

bottom, there one bery fine amiral gone—but den, fine amirals plenty over sea, what place you call Inglan, and de good ship crew!—neber mind dem, dey go for de glory,—Eh, Bobsagee?” But before Bobsagee could give the accustomed and looked-for affirmation to the last little pleasantry of his leader, the admiral had sprung forward and seizing Jumsagee in one hand round the neck, and Bobsagee in the other, he knocked their thick heads together, applying to their entertainment first one foot and then the other, in a manner quite the reverse of *à priori*.

“Get out of my ship this instant, you infernally insolent blackguards,” he exclaimed, as articulately as his ill-timed rage allowed, “and so far from taking your advice, I’ll tell you this, I’ll sail in this ship the day after to-morrow, and by G—d, *if she goes to hell, I’ll go in her.*”*

“Eh, Massa Amiral,” returned Jumsagee, determined not to be browbeat, “you say bery true, you say bery well now, me tink you *bery* fit man to go *dere*, me know no better,—Eh, Jabber-sagee?”

“Berry, Jumsagee,” returned the last, who being

* Such were the words actually used!!

at liberty, and indignant at the usage of his calling, managed to understand that he was required to support his friend's opinion, for which he received a few kicks, and the trio were bundled out of the ship by the master-at-arms.

In the meanwhile the crew had not been unheeding or unconcerned spectators of the scene, for they knew that the shipwrights had more justice on their side than the old admiral chose to admit. They had long considered their ship utterly unsafe—as Jumsagee had said—to encounter even the perils of the station, and with him they considered the attempt to make the homeward passage in her, not only mad, but criminal, and looked with no good-will on the wanton risk of nearly one thousand lives, to gratify a mere whim—of carrying to the dock-yards of his country,—the remains of an old and worn out ship, which had already served her unusually long—thirty years. To these hostile feelings then a considerable addition was made, when the admiral, turning round to the captain, said, sharply, “Captain Grummet, get ready with all speed, the day after to-morrow we sail.”

“But Admiral,—we shall want to take in water to a considerable extent; since what remains on

board has been so long in cask it will be unfit to drink."

"Take in water, sir! Pooh, nonsense. I cannot stay for anything of the sort: I wish to be off at once, or these humbugs ashore will be condemning my ship whether I like it or not. Water her to the usual extent, and then we must rough it out as we have done before—the day after to-morrow you must—you shall be ready."

"No water inside and too much out," muttered an old seaman as his flag-officer strode hastily back to the quarter-deck. "Old story in his Majesty's sarvice, monkey's allowance, more kicks than coppers. It's much to me if-so-be we ever set eyes on old England again at this rate. 'If the ship goes to hell, he will go in her?'—that's fine talking truly for an admiral in a battered old hulk like this, to go nigh fifteen thousand miles, with nine hundred hands aboard;" and verily it was an awful blasphemy! and before half an hour had elapsed there was not a tongue in the ship but had commented upon it; to what effect the reader will see.

CHAPTER III.

“ I have not quailed to danger’s brow
When high and happy—need I now ? ”

THE GIAOUR.

“ WHERE is he, sir, at present,” said the Admiral to Captain Grummet, as they once more reached the quarter-deck.

“ On the poop, sir,” replied the latter, leading the way, while the other slowly ascended behind them. They paused before a low miserable hutch on the larboard side of the deck. It was composed of the broken booms of two oars, firmly lashed to the hammock-nettings, over which was thrown a coarse tarpaulin, or black-painted piece of canvass; this falling to the ground on either side served at once for the roof and gables, the bulwark forming the back, and the front being left open that all the passers-

by might behold the degradation to which the unfortunate officer within was subjected.

“Mr. * * *,” said the Captain, in a loud tone of voice, as he halted in company with his chief before the shed. No answer was returned—“Prisoner,” said the Admiral in a stern harsh tone, peculiarly his own, “rise, sir, and come here, I wish to speak to you.” A movement was now heard within—a clanking of iron, when a figure, which had previously been lying on the bare deck, with its head on a shot-case, began slowly to arise. Having first gained the sitting posture, the prisoner eyed his visitors, and then with considerable effort essayed to stand upright. The last was no easy matter, considering that he wore a pair of iron anklets, to which a heavy bar of the same metal, ten feet in length, was attached; a personal distinction, then in high fashion among naval martinets. Seeing the prisoner was much encumbered with these kind and honourable distinctions, the captain put forth his hand to help him up, but the other shrank away from the proffered assistance with as much abhorrent disgust as a sensitive man from the touch of a reptile. Having gained his feet, he glanced scornfully first

at the Admiral, then at his executive officer, and preserving his silence, half-turned his back towards them. In height the prisoner was as near as might be five feet ten inches, rather more than less. His chest was full and expansive, his other limbs bony and muscular, but rather slight than otherwise, yet conveying an idea of great agility and considerable strength. His dress consisted of a single breasted jacket of blue cloth, bearing the marks of much and long service, from which one moiety of the brass naval buttons had gradually departed, while their loss had been made up by sundry additions in the shape of particles of pitch, tar and adipose substance which had joined company with its texture. The patch on the collar no longer white, but drab, was in some places tinted with a rich dark sienna; caused by the overflowing of that sanguineous fluid, which both our enemies and surgeons combine to let loose. It had fallen from a severe wound on the left temple, over which a canvass bandage was now placed, some still more recent marks of its course being discernible on the face, as well as doubtful vest that covered the breast of the sufferer. The same thing was visible on the lower habili-

ment, which, without the aid of braces, rested on his slim and sailor-like loins. A pair of purser's shoes—that is, made out of the rough leather, without binding or lining—hung loosely on his feet, naked, it is true, but not unseemly, for they were very white and small. His head was protected by what was once a hat, with a black cockade and stripe of gold lace—similar to some now worn by our lacqueys—but having, by ill-luck, got into the possession of a midshipman, he had divided it into two parts, and sliding the upper over the under division, reduced it, as he said, “upon half-pay and allowances.” Having been used for eighteen months as a hat, and slept in for the last three weeks as a night-cap, it appeared somewhat *fade*, and to a fastidious eye, absolutely shabby.

Many of my readers may perhaps think, from this description of the gentleman with whom this chapter opened, that he was in appearance a vulgar or coarse personage—they are deceived, and had they seen him standing fettered before the other two, with his dark hair—although matted with neglect, and his own gore—curling around a high broad forehead, and shading his

expressive and still darker eyes, the contemptuous indignation visible throughout his wan and embrowned features, now more unusually pale from loss of blood, the sardonic smile of his small but rounded lips, the Grecian nose rigid from emotion, and the proud dauntless bearing of his athletic figure, they would have decided that the high nobility of his demeanour hurled the trappings and rank of the admiral and captain at once into an immeasurable bathos. When, however, the beholder observed his right arm swathed in a black kerchief, and suspended by four or five rope-yarns passing round the neck, any former interest in his fate was doubled. At moments there appeared a fierce and unsettled roll in his eye, which spoke of the maniac's shadowy world, nor was it a matter of any wonderment. Exposed to the intense solar heat which the black tarpaulin attracted, as well as to the change of atmosphere which night brought round, that miserable shed had been his only covering for one-and-twenty days, with a diet of bread and water*. During this time, the captain had found

* As I doubt not there will be sundry old women styling themselves naval officers, ready to reiterate their former prating cant

the heat so overpowering in his cabin immediately *beneath*, that he had the poop-deck, on which the prisoner was placed, regularly flooded with water, twice a-day, to keep it cool.

“ Mr. * * *,” commenced the Admiral, “ It is now three weeks since your mutinous conduct obliged me to put you in irons. I have been daily expecting the arrival of a sufficient number of ships to afford you the satisfaction of a court-martial. As, however, I have been disappointed by their absence, I now offer you the alternative of going home in this ship, for your trial, or being landed here with your baggage, and having your name marked on the ship’s books as having ‘ *run.*’ ”

and affirm that these relations of naval tyranny are overdrawn; I deem it as well to remark here that a similar instance of barbarity occurred in the year of Grace and refinement 1831. The whole description of the tarpaulin hutch, &c. being given in the report of the Court Martial held at Portsmouth on the occasion. I leave it to the reader to reflect that if such atrocities are practised in the present day, how infinitely worse the state of the service must have been thirty years since, when we had not hit upon the happy expedient of writing naval novels to hold out *in terrorem*, and make these little gentry shake in their shoes. To return—I have, unfortunately forgotten, the name of the young officer who was the victim of this infamous oppression. I feel almost certain that it was “ Hobhouse,” or some name very similar. He was, subsequent to his acquittal, serving, I think, in the *Britannia*, off Lisbon.

“Admiral ———,” returned the prisoner, turning full towards the person he addressed, and speaking in a calm and dignified, though supercilious tone of voice, “for your kind proposition I have no thanks to offer. The alternative of my quitting the ship at this port, as your moderation proposes, will not at present suit my views. I much prefer returning to England, when, however *you* may act towards *me*, it is my intention, as well to yourself, as to one or two other officers on board,” (looking at the captain,) “in your own words, to ‘afford the satisfaction of a court martial.’” The livid hue of rage that overspread the Admiral’s countenance at this speech, showed how deeply he was stung. His first impulse was to pour forth his usual volley of oaths; his next to curb his passion, and reply with all the authority he could assume.

“A court martial, sir, on me? Silly boy! you dream! whatever may be the offences of which your fevered brain imagines me to be guilty towards you, remember that you have on my quarter-deck forfeited your life to the laws of your country, by striking a superior officer: and before you can execute your futile and meditated revenge, the sentence of death will

have been carried into execution against you. I knew your mother, and was once esteemed as her friend: by that friendship, then, I am moved to offer you this escape from death—be advised—accept it——”

“Accept it, sir?” Never—of death you know I have no fear—I struck my superior officer, you say. I acknowledge it—but remember, it was not until he had dared to inflict on me the disgrace of a blow, in open defiance of the laws of which you speak, to gratify his own contemptible malice.—I knocked him down, sir—and so would I act again, were my aggressor the emperor of all the earth, and instant death the penalty. You ask me for what offence I intend to try you and another officer.—Go consult your note-book on the second of last month—recall your actions for that day: and then your conscience ‘*void of offence*,’ may serve to guide your doubts.”*

* This merely alludes to a still more execrable piece of tyranny which I shall refrain from mentioning, (not wishing to expose my profession!) It shall be left to the reader’s fancy, who can scarcely imagine any thing much worse than the crimes for which a certain captain had his sword broken over his head at Portsmouth some eight years since. The blackest part of the charge was not made out clear in law—I believe—in justice only,—and so for the sake of the cloth the *gallant officer* was not “scragged” as “Dummie Dunnaker” euphoniously expresseth it.

Varied were the emotions of rage and fear which passed over the Admiral's countenance during this speech, like cat's paws on the sea; the latter emotion seemed to prevail, while the captain looked anxiously round, as if dreading that it was overheard. "Poor lad!" he replied, with great cunning, "I fear the effect of the confinement here has rendered him lightheaded." "Say, rather, sir, that such was your intention."—"Yes, Grummet, quite lightheaded; he had better be removed below. Harkye, sir! if I consent to your returning to your duty, will you make a public apology at divisions to Mr. Savage? or must I still keep you in irons on the lower deck, and let your neck take its chance of being stretched in England?" "For the matter of the last, Admiral ——, you will have quite enough to do in looking to your own. An apology to Mr. Savage I will never make, either in public or private, though destruction were the penalty of my refusal." "Insolent, rebellious fool. Down with him, Grummet, to the lower deck—and, Grummet," (speaking in an under voice) "see that a sentry is placed over him—with ball cartridge—to restrain that cursed tongue.—Remember, he is to speak to no living soul."

Within a few minutes after the captain and his superior had quitted the deck, three marines under arms, together with the serjeant, removed the prisoner to between two of the guns, on the lower deck. On his arrival here, he desired that the surgeon might be sent to dress his wounds, which had been received after his striking the lieutenant, in a scuffle with that officer. To the prisoner's demand the sentinel replied, saying, "his orders forbade the approach of any one save the captain." And to this treatment, however inhuman, we must for the present leave him.

The next personage for introduction to the reader, is a lovely, but ill-starred female, to whose fate and beauty I cannot do less than offer a fresh chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

“ She was as beautiful as she was unfortunate, and brave as her trials were fearful.”

LETTERS OF SIR W. DOWLASS.

THE Admiral's blasphemous speech, together with his treatment of Messrs. Jumsagee, Bobsagee, and Jabbersagee, as well as their opinion of his ship, were very speedily noised through the good city of Bombay: for in all Indian places of location for our countrymen, from a few poor subalterns' bungalows to the largest city in that immense empire, scandal flies with a swiftness unknown to all save “ military men ” and military females; whose heads are too empty or too thick to devise any more innocent recreation. The women may be pardoned—a male gossip is the devil.

However this said story having been freely circulated as the best *bonne-bouche* of the week, it

received various exaggerations, until at last the handsome wife of Colonel B. was heard to exclaim to the general's aide-de-camp, the good-looking captain S——, "my dearest captain, have you heard the news? Admiral ——— is going to sea in that rotten old ship of his, on purpose to drown himself and crew. Don't you guess what it's for—to spite the governor-general.

The mixture of truth and fiction in this report, only gave it additional circulation; for the fact of the governor-general and the Admiral being at variance was known to every one; and in his ship several families were about to embark for England, among which was General ———. This officer was proceeding home in consequence of some serious disturbance among the military and civil authorities; in which he had been countenanced and advised by the Admiral, who now gave him a cabin in his ship. On his arrival in England an investigation of great moment was expected to take place; he was also to be accompanied by his wife.

But by far the most interesting of all who were thus returning to their native shores, was the young and beautiful Mrs. Somers. At the tender

age of eighteen she had arrived in India, consigned to the care of an uncle and aunt. I need not say that she was poor, but what is far more rare, indifferent to wealth. Many "splendid matches" were soon at her disposal, but her heart accompanied her hand, and both were given to a gallant and amiable subaltern—Lieutenant Somers; the cadet of a good family, whose means were hardly sufficient for their support.

However they had enough of philosophy to know that on earth man can be no more than happy—and seldom so far favoured,—and they therefore resolved to seize the fleeting portion of that—oh! most fleeting of human visions—now within their reach, nor afflict themselves by using a foresight that might only anticipate their allotted portion of misery. They married—his wife brought him a daughter. The first brief years of their married life fled, and left them nearly as much delighted with each other as during their earlier acquaintance. With her the climate agreed admirably; not so with him: and at this juncture increasing ill health and the demise of an uncle to whom he was left residuary legatee, obliged him to return to England, leaving his wife behind with her aunt,

(now a widow,) partly from a consideration of expense, and the intentions he entertained of speedily returning, and partly to save the fatigues of a sea voyage to herself.

On reaching England, however, he found the property more considerable than he had expected, and his health so precarious that he instantly wrote for his wife to return to him with her relative. This last request the grave forbade; the former one was joyfully received, and as the first step towards its fulfilment, she obtained permission to take a passage in Admiral ——'s ship.

Those who have been severed from the object of the heart's fervid affections, will readily conceive the sensations that agitated Mrs. Somers on hearing the report of the day. Mingling with the dread of an awful death so natural to the softer sex, she felt that in risking the life of herself and child, the happiness of her husband—the first thought of her life—was also staked, and urged by these reflections, she immediately waited on the Admiral.

“Madam,” replied the latter to her query respecting the truth of the report, “you may be sure that I have something else to heed, besides

the gossip telegraphing about from one old woman to another in an Indian garrison city. You inform me"—and here he softened down rather—"of the peculiar circumstances under which you are returning to England;—why you see I also have a family, and tho' our run in life's log is not equally scored, you must give me credit for more feeling for them, than needlessly to risk myself in this fashion. However, madam, the long and short end of it is this—I can't keep such a look out ahead as to say what weather's going to blow in a six months' passage, and so the surest way is, if you do think there is too much danger, to wait over till another opportunity offers."

"But Admiral—I am most anxious, if possible, to take advantage of your ship, and I merely took the liberty of waiting on you to know if the report is true—that—"

"True, madam, you must not believe any reports—all a pack of yarns these fellows take a delight in spinning. My advice is if you are earnest in your wish to reach England speedily, to embark with me—because if I believed that the ship was in danger of foundering, you can see it is most unlikely that I should choose it for myself. So make

yourself easy, my dear madam—and any service I can render to you on the passage, will give me pleasure, madam—pleasure—” saying which, the Admiral rose, gave her his hand, and, as the shortest method of getting quit of the subject, wished his fair visiter good morning.

And here, perhaps, the reader will perceive what was actually the case, that Mrs. Somers was as much enlightened by her visit to the Admiral, as if it had never taken place. The result was a determination to go: so soon may soothing accents work upon a female ear—more especially when they proceed from a quarter where surliness only is expected—the ‘dear madam,’ the friendly shake of the hand, and the expressed wish to be of service to her on the passage, went further than the soundest arguments.

It was, in sooth, a great relenting in the veteran; for civility was a vice to which he was not ordinarily addicted. Yet, who that lays the slightest claim to humanity, can boast a heart which beauty may not move,—or what affects us more—young beauty rendered still more interesting by sorrow?

It was night—the last night which was to be spent by the ship's officers at Bombay. Many of them were joyously carousing on shore, giving the oft-repeated shake of the hand in token of farewell, and pledging the purple cup with those, whom they were, perhaps, destined never to behold again. Others were yet at the billiard-table; while some, in the words of Gray, were bidding an affectionate adieu to “their dusky loves.”

Boat after boat, arrived alongside, and the speculative and attentive observer might have witnessed every form and grade in the effect of potations on the human system.—The mad—noisy—quarrelsome—hilarious—contemplative—disputative—maudlin—dull—and bestial.—All of their several tints and shades.

The officer pacing on one side of the quarter-deck, and the midshipman on the other, imagined forth the delights which might be yet awaiting them in England; or it may be, regretting that they had once more to quit a foreign station, without having obtained that promotion, the hopes of which had heightened the prospect on leaving home.

The last party had arrived as the bells of the

ship struck three o'clock; the buzz of the mosquito gradually sunk to rest, the morning breeze began to breathe gently on the face of the waters, while they reflected back the lightning tints of Heaven, now gradually waning into grey. A freshness, such as we might imagine to be redolent of a newly created universe, diffused itself over the scene; and the seamen might be seen inhaling the cool and fragrant air, as they rose from sleeping on the deck.—Another hour passed—along the sky were scattered tiny fleecy clouds, converging in a circle toward that spot in the heavens, whence a ruddy indistinct glow arose, flinging its roseate blush on their transparent edges.

Dimly in the distance came forth the domes and minarets, which so distinctly mark the features of an eastern city. A delicious purple mist seemed to float around them, until the sun gradually rising, dispersed it rudely to the winds, and left its own burnished effulgence to supply the place. Then the mimic waves merrily danced, as if enjoying the breeze that ushered in the day, and delighting in the splendour of those beams that heralded its approach.

Once more the city which the night had hushed,

teemed forth with life : the distant murmur of the reviving multitude awoke upon the ear, till shooting from the shadows of the shore, were seen the turbaned crews of many a light caique.

A shrill pipe, re-echoed from many parts of the seventy-four, was now heard—it was succeeded by the deep call of several powerful voices, and in a few minutes the before silent mass woke into existence and action. These sounds had barely time to float along the glittering tides, and reach the little brig to leeward, when they seemed to revive once more, and then flit silently away into the bosom of space, like those sweet chimes the reader may have heard at even along the lake in Switzerland; repeated distantly, and then melting away into the far blue ether and the snow-clad mountain; while the delighted hearer might fancy it to be an echo, or the voice of some repeating spirit of the scene, did not the distant spire rise to claim its birth.—Oh! Nature! how lovely are thy scenes, if man's dark passions could forbear to disenchant their spell*.

* “ Strange that where nature lov'd to trace,
As if for gods, a dwelling place;
There man enamoured of distress,
Should mar it into wilderness.”

Perhaps my reader, who has never been at sea, may picture the delight with which the officers, rising from their heated cabins, would behold such a scene as the one I have attempted to describe; the men with their breasts applied to the capstan-bar, heaving up the anchor to the mirth-inspiring sounds of the merry flute and fiddle; their hearts bounding wildly in their bosoms with all the pride and joyousness of a sailor, as they turned their eyes aloft, to behold spar above spar distend its bleached canvass freely to the breeze, with many an indignant flutter, like a young blood-horse champing at the bit.

Alas! alas! tyranny has nowhere so noble an empire under control, nor over any empire is her control more despotic. She alone has the power to annul all such feelings as those I have described. Not as her despicable creatures would tell you, from a mistaken view of discipline—no, but from an inherent blackness in the human heart which makes it thirst for power however obtained, and would try to persuade us, while thus gratifying its “lust of sway,” that it is ministering to the necessities of its office. But to this fraud, as to many others, our eyes are at

length beginning to be opened, and in a few years it will exist but in remembrance; and that such things bring their own punishment, my story but too lamentably proves; to which, indeed, it is high time that I return.

The last studding-sail had been swiftly hoisted to its giddy elevation, the last “pull” at the back-stays duly taken, before the watch was called, which gave to such of the ship’s company and officers whose turn it was to stay below, the license so to do, or, providing they had no duty, the call of the watch allowed them to loiter on the deck and view the departing land.

It has a strange sensation that same hour, when you leave a country where you have made yourself a home. The heart shrinks into itself, half pleased, half saddened, with the ache, the palpitation that runs through it. The lip may be mute; but how often does the question present itself—“Shall I ever behold this spot again?—if so, when?—and then under what difference in external circumstances? In greater happiness or misery; or will the grave before then enclose one victim more?—and then—then—Spirits of futurity tell me what then.” Oh barrier to mortal knowledge! beyond

which we are forbidden to pry ; where Hope with her celestial wand turns back the saddened disappointed worldling, whose heart has been the food of grief, and bids it dream of happiness once more !

It is at such moments as these that the full bitterness of this delusion—life—comes over us ; it is now that we feel how completely we have been mocked—that though the sun of life be descending o'er its barren desert, the *mirage* which dazzled and lured us onward at morning, hath vanished for ever before the approach of eve, leaving our limbs more weary, and our thirsts unquenched ! One by one steal forth the remembrances of such spots of verdure as have become the resting places of memory and the retracing soul ; then on each sunny island of the past, we view the lifeless herbage of a former spring—the scattered embers of a pristine fire—the dried-up channel of an ancient stream ; while over all are scattered the withered affections of a vacant heart. Thus is remembrance like the frankincense, which preserves in odour the gathered and lifeless flowers of May.

Yet with this sad experience of having lived too long, there is mingled a sedative, nay, an intoxicating feeling, such as may be imparted by the

venomous reptile whose bite, though it produces death, yet clothes that death in sleep. But although by our sad experience, life is thus stripped of its alluring hues, yet the mind still looks forth upon the gorgeous scene, and *feels* that the wisdom which could educe such creation from mere chaos, cannot but have doomed the soul to something higher than mortality. This it is at which the sceptic wavers—the sufferer feels fresh hopes—the villain dreads—but which none conscientiously deny.

The officers were now gathering aft upon the poop, some sad, some joyous, and others dull; talking in the suppressed tones of men feeling themselves in the presence of a superior who exacts “the uttermost farthing.” Eight o’clock—the hour for breakfast arrived, and the decks were once more deserted to the sole occupancy of the officers of the watch. At the expiration of an hour after the ship’s company had been mustered in divisions, the fair passengers came forth to add their beauties—far from being the most inconsiderable—to the many others which the scene could boast.

Gradually the breeze died away, as the receding city melted into the far horizon before; sinking

beneath the wave, it wholly disappeared. While some of the officers were looking towards the spot, a white volume of smoke was seen to arise, succeeded after an interval by the roar of cannon: this continued for some time; until the signal midshipman, being sent to the mast-head, discovered sufficient to warrant the conclusion that these guns were only intended to enforce a signal of recal, which the distance did not allow to be clearly perceived*. However this might be, it seems that Nelson, at Copenhagen, established an axiom through all future times, that no officer should see or comprehend a signal of which he did not approve. Consequently, in the present instance, not the slightest notice was taken of the affair.

* This, my dear Sir ———, you will recollect was the fact—being indeed the recal of General ——— by the civil government. You will also remember a certain poor wight who had missed his passage by his tardiness, and who while deeply deploring his fate, anxiously watched if the signal would be obeyed. You were then posted in the R—— frigate lying at Bombay, and were kind enough to afford to the straggler a passage. How little could we then foresee that he—alias I myself—would by that misfortune, have been saved from an untimely visit to Davy Jones; and reserved for the pleasure of dedicating my scribblings to you. “Ah! those were queer times,” as His present M——y said to you in reference to the days when you served together.

Soon the light airs which yet fluttered around the noble vessel, gradually forsook the lower sails, too heavy to be moved by their gentle influence, and confined their action to the light canvass spread aloft, and even there its force was insufficient to keep them from flapping idly on the masts. It was now that the little brig taking advantage of the light gale, so much more adapted to her size, amused herself by what is technically termed, sailing round the huge but nearly motionless hull of her consort.

With the approach of night the breeze freshened once more, when gradually the last petticoat vanished below the hatchway, bearing with it the regrets of sundry people of taste, who hold an opinion somewhat similar to my own, that few robes are so pleasant to the eye—its disappearance was the signal for stern discipline to reassert all her rights. Quarters followed, the top-sails were reefed, and the hammocks piped down; while night gradually reassumed her dusky empire, and sleep brought balm to many an aching heart and weary eye.

CHAPTER V.

“ You know what you would feel, to see the much-loved wife of your bosom, and your helpless prattling little ones, turned adrift into the world, degraded and disgraced from a situation in which they had been respectable and respected, and left almost without the necessary support of a miserable existence.—Alas ! sir, must I think that such soon will be my lot ? ”

BURNS' LETTER.

WITHIN there ! Mr. Græme, may a body get in to ye at present now ? ”

“ Come in, come in, whoever you are,” answered a low husky voice, in which deep grief seemed to contend with those manly feelings of a noble heart, that forbid our sacred sorrows to be wantonly revealed. The applicant, on receiving this invitation, gradually slid back the cabin door at which he had been tapping, and stooping under the hammock swinging at the doorway, entered.

“ Ah, is it you, Grooves ? Shut the door, will you, old boy, and take a seat ? ” The new comer having performed his host's request, both remained silent.

The cabin was of a diminutive size considering the uses of feeding and sleeping to which it was

applied. Opposite to the entrance, and built up against the ship's side, was a bed-place—the materials were coarse, and the fashion plain, but every thing was scrupulously neat and clean. The tenant was sitting on a stool at the foot of the bed, his elbow resting on the table supported his head, while the large bony hand extended over a broad open forehead, concealed the emotions of his mind, and gave shelter to his eyes. Not that the last was particularly needed, since the only light which illuminated this den of desolation, proceeded from a small bottle, that by the insertion of two tin tubes had been converted into a lamp, the whole resting on a somewhat fantastically carved stand of wood.

On the huge beams which traversed the ceiling and gave support to the lower deck, were suspended a few articles belonging to the owner—a triangle, a pair of compasses, a T-rule, and two fishing lines. On the wainscotting, or bulk-head, over the table, was hung a rude picture of a young woman and two infants, as beautiful as the artist's skill would permit: in the back ground was a harbour, some shipping, and a few trees. In this untaught daub one thing was singular—while the richest colours were lavished on the

inanimate scenery, the three principal figures were wholly in black, even their countenances were almost hueless. Nor was the frame less peculiar. It was of mahogany, carefully carved into an oval shape, formed by that emblem of eternity, the serpent of Saturn. On the table beneath, supported by a moveable bracket, a piece of green baize was spread, and a large old book lay open; the leaves were thumbed and soiled, appearing to have been much read, yet with great care. For some minutes after the entrance of Grooves, the silence which he had interrupted, was resumed; during which time he remained sitting on a sea-chest, one hand twirling round his low black canvass hat, the other stroking down the lank grizzled hair that strewed his weather-beaten temples; stedfastly eying his companion, who remained reading the volume before him with much earnestness. Gradually the latter closed the book, and slightly lifting his eyes as he withdrew his hand, slowly repeated in a half-conscious tone the concluding part of the sentence he had just perused, “‘To judge the fatherless and the oppressed, that the man of the earth may no more oppress.’”

“ Oh, sir, that be a goodly book surely. If so

be as a man's larnt to read," remarked Grooves with a curious sound partly between a snuffle and a grunt.

"Yes, my boy, yes, that book supplies what no other book can, and, if read properly, teaches better than all the articles of war how to do your duty and obey your superiors."

"Aye, sir, aye, it doth surelye."

"Yes, my boy, and what is better still, we learn from this, that however it may blow here below, we've smooth water and a best bower to ride by at last; and then, though we do miss on earth the little darlings of life,"—here his voice grew thick and almost inaudible—"why—why my boy, ye see we shall meet them aloft and then"—

"Aye, Master Græme, and then," returned Grooves, while a flush of indignation came over his honest old face, "no more banyan days for Jack, no first leaftenant to holystone decks of a morning, nor —— skipper and admiral with their catamarans, taking an honest man's warrant away purpose to starve his old girl and little young uns,"——

"Never mind, Grooves, never mind, my old fellow—can't last for ever; besides, don't fash yourself about me—a man that's down in the world, you know, has no business to have any friends!"

“Avast there, sir! stopper now, Master Græme, I don’t think I’ve desarved to have that said—I whom you’ve sarved so often aboard o’ this galley-ship.—Holy man knows if there’s e’er a thing I could do, to bring turn for turn”——

“I know it, Grooves, I know it, ’twas but from grief I said any thing that seemed like to the contrary, but ’tishard to bear! It is, Grooves, it is,”—and the carpenter hid his face between his hard worn hands—a pause succeeded—it would have been difficult to say who was suffering the most, the actual mourner or he whose sorrow owed its rise to sympathy.

“Howsomever, Master Græme, you knows it’s wrong to indulge in these here things”—roughly scrubbing the corner of his eye with the callous end of his fore-finger—“you knows, sir, when I was down in the report*, you said as how hope and”——

“Hope, Grooves, yes, but hope can never unclosethe grave, and surely Mary with her little dears there,” pointing to the picture, “must be gone to her last resting-place, or nigh three years would’nt have past without a word or a line—and then, Grooves, to think what misery they

* The report is a list of those men for whom some round dozens of the cat-o’-nine tails are designed.

must have suffered, that young creature left to struggle with a world that—oh Heaven, do I live to say it?—that has baffled me—I who can strive and toil for my bread, can buffet the many strokes of cruel chance—I who have before me such a reason to lead me on—the comfort of those I love, and such a prize to win—as meeting my own Mary! Oh! Grooves, to think that all this has been in vain—that every thing has thus been undone in an hour; the work of years—suffering—hopes—tears—all gone—destroyed! Good God support me.—Grooves, my old boy, I do —*I think* I do—wish my fears may be true, for if Mary is alive, how bitter this last mishap will come!—What can I do for her? Yes, she is gone—must be gone, and I—have but to follow.”

“ Well, I will say it, Master Græme, I will say it, the heart that could go to swab your name off as a warrant, is more nor less than a divil.—To think that ever your warrant should a been gid to me. I—you’ve towed so often out of the breakers! I—an ignorant know-nothing—take the place of my betters who read the bible, and write letters! I’m ashamed. Yet what could I do? There’s Poll and her piccanninies lives at Stroud and draws some of my rations, ‘and if-so-be,’ says I to myself, when the

skipper told me—‘if-so-be I refuse it, why it’ll only go to some of the rest of the crew; and I, mayhap, will lose my mateship,’ and ‘so’ says I, ‘if Master Græme will obligate me by taking all the pay that’s over what I used to have, why it’ll be better for him, and no worse for me: and seeing how he’s often lent a shipmate a helping hand before now, why, after all, it’s only what’s round and square’; and so you see, Master Græme, I just dropped alongside here, to see if ye would so far do an old fellow another bit of a kindness——so that’s the long and the short of it.”

The carpenter raised his head, his eyes were red, and his countenance plainly indicated how deeply this offer had affected him. “Bill, my old boy,” he at length said, as the power of utterance returned, “I didn’t think throughout this ship, where I’ve suffered so much, that my eyes would ever have to water for one kind deed; but I judged our nature hardly! A sailor’s heart, I see, when power has not turned it to flint, knows generosity better than ever a human breast in the wide world—give me your hand, old fellow!” and seizing the vacant member in his powerful grasp, while he turned away his face, he shook it with all the heartfelt warmth which such a noble offer might

be supposed to inspire. "May you never know want in this world, Bill, and as little of sorrow as may be—you deserve it all! But I cannot take your offer—Heaven sent the berth to reward your good old heart—it is not for me to take away your earnings."

"But, Master Græme," returned the other, looking into his hat, now placed on his knees, as if he expected that the forefinger, so busily scratching the straw crown, was to turn up some heap of treasure—and this to hide the weakness so visible in his rugged lineaments—"think of your Mary!"

"Yes Bill, but——"

"Yes; I know what you're going to say—I tell ye it's no manner of use to me, my young squaws are nigh old enough to take care of themsel; and my old 'oman has lived on the same pay these last five years. What'll *she* do with more? 'sept grow stravagant or sich like. An old fellow like me,—only wants a shiner once a cruise for a bit of the weed, and a new scribbling brish—so *do* keep it, Master Græme, *do*, for the dear creature, and all 'll be right and tight once more. As for the berth being sent to me,—the holy man knows Bill Grooves never desarved to

get a quid in his box that came out o'Græme's. —Yes, you will take it, I know you will, for the little 'uns at the Cove, and better luck still will come round." As the honest old tar said this, he hastily rose, and applying the sleeve of his coat to his face once more, drew back the door, and was about to escape, when his pericranium came in contact with that of some person about to enter.

Drawing it hurriedly back, and pettishly regarding the object of the encounter, he exclaimed—" Shiver my timbers, Serjeant, one would think your knowledge-box sarved for your ball cartridge, it's almost as hard as somebody's heart that I know."

" 'Hard,' " returned the serjeant, rubbing the part affected rather angrily, " my head may be hard enough for the matter o' that ; but it was'nt meant to stand a skrimmage with such a two-and-thirty as you've got there shipped on your shoulders. It's one bell, Sir—time to douse the glim."

" Aye, aye, Serjeant," returned Græme, and taking from a corner a square case-bottle, he filled a small tin cup and handed it to the living extinguisher. " There Serjeant, that'll help you to see all the lights out, mine first. Here Grooves,

once my old mate, and now my master, don't be off yet, without splicing the main brace."

"No, Master Græme——"

"Nay, never say no," and the carpenter detained his arm. Grooves turned his head round, the rum was on the table,—he paused a moment; rubbed his hairy cheek, then flung aside his hat and resumed his seat. It was too much for him! What sailor with rum in the distance, was ever known to proceed *passibus æquis*? or what tar to refuse a glass of grog?

This was no sooner accomplished than the door was carefully closed, the slides of the windows, or air-holes, securely drawn up, and the question put by Græme, "You see our lights are out, Serjeant?"

"Aye, aye, Sir, *out* fast enough," muttered the marine departing—then, in a tone intended to soothe his conscience, "At least I can't see any glimmer *in*," and forthwith he went to report the same to the master-at-arms.

"Well, Master Græme, here's better luck still;" and Grooves drank off the potation which the other had mixed: then setting the glass down with a grimace, he added, "That water's enough

to sifficate a horse; one would think, to taste, that it had gone round the world in butt along with ould Commodore Noah; that time when he brought-up high and dry on the top of Mount Rat, as our parson in the Holy Joe* used to talk about."

" Well, Grooves, this is what we get for serving the King. The Lord knows what will be the end of us all; but if ever we reach England the thing's much to me.—As for this water; worse could scarcely be found in a ditch. The Admiral, however, wouldn't let the captain wait to get any better, saving a fortnight's allowance, which is kept back for the passengers, and this is given to the ship's company."

" 'Kept back for the passengers!'—save us then—a foremast man, I suppose, isn't flesh and blood—nixt old bluebeard (the admiral's nick-name) won't 'low us to have a soul. Here be we, only ten days at sea, drinking of foul water, and eating weevily biscuit!"

* When the San Josef, a line of battle ship taken from the Spanish, was in commission on the Mediterranean station during the war, the sailors gave her the nick-name of the Holy Joe. She has now, I believe, been laid up in ordinary for many years at one of our sea-ports.

“Well, well, Grooves, we must grin and bear it, as we have before. And when do you mean to come into your cabin?” looking round the berth which he had tenanted, with the regret of one who leaves in adversity, some spot that had witnessed his happier hours.

“Why, Master Græme, the first leaftenant sent me here for that purpose jist now: only I couldn’t have the heart to say so; but if-so-be you’ll accept of it, why ye see, you can sleep here at night and mess with me, and so——” Here the ship suddenly heeled over, as if under the pressure of a heavy gust of wind. A shrill pipe was then heard, followed by the hoarse cry of the boatswain, “All hands shorten sail.”

“Douse the glim, boy,” said Græme—the lamp was blown out, and a general rush was made towards the quarter-deck.

Taking advantage of the license entrusted by Horace to all gentlemen of the pen or pencil, I shall beg leave to pass over the scene that awaited the crew on deck, as it was merely one of the frequent squalls which a sailor has to encounter.

Having shortened sail to the three close-reefed top-sails, the watch was called at eleven o’clock,

when the carpenter reporting that the ship had made five inches of water, two gangs of men were set to the pumps.

By the next morning, the wind having considerably abated, a sail was descried to windward, running down to join the Admiral. The captain of the stranger having come on board, followed by his coxswain, bearing a leathern mail-bag, the report soon spread through the ship, that despatches had arrived from England in the frigate to windward. In a few seconds, many a gruff and weather-beaten countenance might have been seen crowding aft, and prying about, anxious to receive the long-expected epistle from home.

Foremost among these expectants stood Græme; but it was no longer with the fervent, the buoyant hope of former days, that eagerly waited to hear its wishes confirmed, and yet more deeply dreaded to see its fears realized.—No it was more like one whose last stay is gone, and who now proceeds in the usual routine from mere habit.

The captain and his clerk were standing abaft on the main deck; the latter holding the various letters which had just arrived, the former with one open in his hand. Around them walked up

and down such passengers as were sufficiently well to enjoy the exercise ; among the rest, Mrs. Somers, who was leaning on the arm of a friend. Before the captain were grouped the men ; to the right, leaning on the ridge rope of the guns with his arms crossed on his breast, stood the dejected and disgraced carpenter.

“Where is Græme of the carpenter’s crew?” suddenly demanded the captain, in a tone of voice that caused Mrs. Somers to turn round in a startled manner.

The carpenter stepped forward, and uncovering his head, answered in a voice of considerable emotion—“Here I am, Sir.” As the captain looked on his countenance, a mingled expression of triumph and sarcasm was visible.

“Stand out here, Sir, and listen to the contents of this letter.”

The carpenter having taken up the spot pointed out by the captain, the latter read in a voice distinctly audible, the following letter :—

“Admiralty.

“SIR,

“I am desired by my Lords Commissioners to inform you, that the enclosed letter is for Charles

Græme, landsman, now serving on board his Majesty's ship —— under your command.

“It has been forwarded to this office by the under secretary of state for the home department; who received it from Mary Græme, to be transmitted to her husband, subsequent to her condemnation, and prior to her execution for theft; she having suffered the extreme penalty of the law for this offence on the —— ultimo.”

A scream from Mrs. Somers here interrupted any further perusal, and on the captain's looking up, he beheld stretched at his feet the figure of the bereaved husband. From the first word of the letter he had listened with the most intense anxiety, which had rapidly changed to suspicion — alarm — agony, and then a maddened unconscious gaze of bewilderment; but when the final and irrevocable sentence was heard, amid the breathless silence of the crew, over-stretched nature could support no more: the distended eye—the set teeth—the hand that idly clutched at the empty air, relaxed—no sound was uttered,—no tear was seen to fall, but consciousness and reason appeared to desert their empire, and the deck received a form not less insensate than itself. All colour, save the sallow tints of

the grave, had flown from his gaunt swarthy cheek, and several of his shipmates now kindly endeavoured to lift up the stiffened body.

Convulsions followed,—the sufferer was carried below—and revived to feel yet more acutely those throes which during lifetime surpass the pangs of death. With the utmost eagerness he demanded the letter—the last relic he was ever to behold on earth of the beloved wife of his bosom: she on whom his dearest affections had rested in the waste of the world's waters, like the olive branch of the bird of peace; she whose memory had stood the barrier to his fierce and angry emotions; she who in thought had stemmed his soul, when scorn and oppression had roused it up to fury—she was gone! The last link between himself and humanity; between the noontide of his days and his young morn of life—all was past—severed—but a name—and that name was—infamy and disgrace!!—Never was revolution in the nature of a man more complete, more instantaneous, or more deeply fraught with ruin to all around.

When the captain read the letter, he had suppressed a passage to this effect: “And I have it further in command from my Lords Commissioners, to desire that you will take every means

of forwarding the enclosed, and rendering to the said Charles Græme, if deserving, such alleviations as the distressing circumstances of the case may permit."

This letter bore a date nearly two years prior to the moment of delivery, since,—such are the chances of war,—it had, owing to Græme's frequent change of ships, returned once to England, and been sent out again. The surgeon having seen that his patient was restored to animation, quitted him to pursue his other duties.

Few, indeed, are the hearts which care to sympathize with the wretched. Grief is so much the natural inheritance of us all, that none need seek it. Under this,—the heaviest blow that fate could have inflicted,—none came near the sufferer save the messenger sent by Mrs. Somers with some wine and the offers of any service which she could render him, and such of the crew as had experienced his kindness; since throughout the ship's company, he was esteemed as one of superior mould. The foremost of those who now came to condole with, and if possible to assist him, was Grooves; and he having obtained the letter from the captain's clerk, they shut themselves up in the cabin on the orlop deck, (before described,) while Græme by the light

of his lamp endeavoured to read the last lines which his cherished and injured wife had written.

His voice—if voice it might be called, where the sob of agony and the quick breathing of rage and despair were alone mingled—was scarcely audible, as he ran over the following :

“ Newgate, — — —

“ MY DEAREST HUSBAND,

“ ALTHOUGH the many letters I have written to you haven't come to hand, I write once more to tell you of the distress your being stolen away has brought upon us. 'Twasn't known a week that you were pressed, before William Byer swore a debt against you, seized our bit of things, and turned me and the dear creatures into the streets.

“ Well, Charles, Mr. Flannaghan helped us out, and I came over to London, thinking maybe to find you in the Tender, as some of the neighbours at the Cove told me ; but when I came here, you weren't known at all ; and before Mr. Flannaghan could help us again, we were all starving. Dear husband, how shall I tell it you—you know the dear girl of your heart was honest—you do—you know Charley, I wouldn't

have gone to touch what was none of mine, for worlds—but how could I see the little dears perish for the want of a cold potato and a drop of milk, let alone your own Mary, who hadn't tasted a meal for two days, with little Judy at her breast? How could I, when the dears were *your* children, bating my own, without a rag to cover their little bodies from the skreel and the blast.—Well, it's no use grieving. I was nigh mad, and going into a shop after begging about all the day, I just lifted a bit of linen stuff and they put me in prison; and the judge is going to hang me—your own Mary; though I said to him *, 'Your Ho-

* As I before remarked, the dreadful truth of this sad story allows Fiction nothing to add. The poor criminal's case is thus mentioned in the parliamentary reports of the day:—" *The woman's husband was pressed—their goods seized for some debt of his; and she with two small children turned into the streets a begging.* It is a circumstance not to be forgotten that she was very young—under nineteen,—and remarkably handsome. She went to a linen draper's shop—took some coarse linen off the counter, and slipped it under her cloak. The shopman saw her, and she laid it down:—FOR THIS SHE WAS HANGED. Her defence was"—(here follows her defence *verbatim* as in the text :) "The parish officers testified to the truth of this story. When brought to receive sentence, she behaved in such a manner as proved her mind to be in a distracted and desponding state, and *the child was sucking at her breast when she set off for Tyburn gallows.*" Who can read this—contemplate our penal code, and not shudder?

nour, *I lived in credit and wanted for nothing till a press-gang came and stole my husband from me; but since then I have had no bed to lie on; nothing to give my children to eat; and they were almost naked. Perhaps your Honour,' says I, 'I may have done something wrong, for I hardly knew what I did.'*

“ Oh, dearest Charley! it isn't the death—since I might as well be dead as have you taken away from me—but when I think of the dear creatures I must leave behind me, and see them all here look upon me as a thief, I who had always been the honest girl of your heart when we lived so happy in our dear little cabin;—but no, *you* won't think me so, for 'twas to cover your children, the dears, and you—oh, if I could only see *you* before its all over—you wouldn't let them take *me* from you. I can't help crying, and it blots what I write, and I kiss the paper that'll see you before your Mary, and you'll kiss it when I'm ——

“ Charles, dear Charles—that word distracts me; but 'tis no use, they're waiting for me to go, and the sweet Judy's crying at my breast; but she little knows what's happening to her mother.

“ If you do come back, find them out, and take them from the workhouse for the sake of her who, bating all her distress, has always been in thought and act ever your most faithful and loving wife,

“ MARY GREME.

“ Good Mr. —, the minister, has been very kind to me, and has promised to see this forwarded—he has done all to comfort me, and says we shall yet meet again. May God bless you, dearest Charles!”

The above was enclosed in a letter from the chaplain of Newgate, stating that “the near approach of so dreadful a death seemed to have unsettled her reason, and she set out for Tyburn gallows with her babe at her bosom, but ultimately suffered little in the execution of the sentence!”

The injured widower had no sooner finished the perusal of these heart-rending documents, than he frantically pressed to his lips the blotted sheet, yet marked with the tears which his murdered wife had shed, when she kissed the inanimate paper because it would yet meet the lips of him she had so loved.—He lifted his eye, and

vacantly gazing, seemed to call from the faithful cell of memory, her youthful and beautiful image, and then, as the futility of remembrance, the utter nonentity of the past, and the certain misery of the future came over him, he dashed his head once more on the table, tore large handfuls of his hair away with the convulsive strength of a giant, and groaned aloud in tones that betrayed all the phrensied despair of a maniac !

“ Do not speak to me, for mercy, say nothing,” he exclaimed to the attempted consolations of Grooves, “ but leave me—let no shape so demoniacal as that of a human being approach me, lest I become a murderer !” Grooves was about to utter something in reply, when fortunately he was summoned to the quarter-deck.

CHAPTER VI.

“ I heard—I saw—but no—I will not see—
If thou wilt perish I will fall with thee;
My life—my love—my hatred—all below
Are on this cast.”——

THE last glimpse of the stranger's sails had ceased to be visible in contrast with the dark lowering heavens; she had arrived to bring tidings of the bitterest woe, and sown the seed that was to bring forth terrific fruit, and this accomplished, had departed once more. The wind again sprung up, the heavens put on their angriest and most portentous aspect, as evening approached, and the dark purple clouds were rapidly whirled along their course. On sounding the well at three P. M. the water was found to have increased, and the ship's company were once more sent to the pumps. Six o'clock arrived, and the drum's roll to quarters sounded sullenly through the armed

decks of the seventy-four, calling the men from their wretched meal on rum, bad water, and worse biscuit,—to inspect their machines for human slaughter, and see that the red Spirit of Carnage should be as little balked as possible, when the opportunity occurred to offer sacrifice at her shrine.

As the drum sent its hoarse rattling sound throughout the confined space in which it vibrated, previous to its escaping on the pathless ocean, the Admiral and the officers with whom he had been dining, came forth from the cabin. Placing his foot proudly on the quarter-deck, to hide in the artificial firmness of his character, the natural hesitation which age never fails to bring, his first looks were directed to the huge surfaces of bellying canvass over-head, through the tackle and cordage of which the wind sighed mournfully as it swept along. Then walking for a second on the weather-side of the quarter-deck, he paused opposite the gangway, and stepping into a square space that like a warden's turret overlooked the bristling tiers, he observed the scene with a wistful eye.

Beneath him rolled the deep blue waves, whose

size made even the mighty hull of the seventy-four shrink into insignificance. What could be more dauntless than the headlong impetuosity with which they rushed to meet the prow now foaming onward—dividing their liquid and sapphire tinted crystal, flinging off the spray to the gale, which angrily blew it back on the chequered and senseless tide; whence, as the ship gave a more heavy roll than usual, it bounded upward, falling in-board on those exposed. As the Admiral looked down, the briny drops that came fresh in his face, after rising heated from the wine-table, inspired a feeling of triumph and self-confidence in human power that many of my readers must have experienced. But as he continued to gaze on the waste before him, where mountains of water swelled tumultuously one after the other, rejoicing in their mighty and resistless strength; when he considered that their depth was almost as boundless as their expanse; when he reflected that the vessel in which himself and his thousand mariners were navigating their trackless course was but a mere speck, whose existence seemed to be an ingenious human miracle, and whose destruction was a probability of frequent occur-

rence ; when he beheld each successive wave disporting its violence on his vessel's sides, and lashing her timbers, as if merely the mark which instinct pointed out for their fury ; when moreover he reflected on the long voyage to be accomplished, and still more on the doubtful fitness of his flag-ship to encounter such a trial,—it must be confessed, though he himself would not have allowed it, that his heart sunk within him. Nor was his character such as would admit of the only two considerations that could support him truly through all these dangers ; (and indeed, any, however imminent ;) first, the calm conviction that death is the extreme boundary of human woe ; and next, that reliance on a higher Power, which contemplates in death a deliverance from the ills of life.

Raising his glance from the deep with an unconscious shudder, he turned it to windward, that point of first attraction for a seaman's eye. There nothing was to be seen, save the fancied image of the ancients,—the turbulent and imprisoned winds pouring forth from their caverned recesses, which the piles of dark and lurid clouds might be supposed to represent. Thence the eye wan-

dering along the horizon to that spot where, in the far distance, was situated the isle of their birth—the sunny west—one vivid streak of intense light was seen, abruptly tinted from the shining white to a pale yellow, then a dull red, then to madder-purple, and last to sombre grey, where night prepared to receive into her dusky arms, the last waning glory of the day. Towards this break—this seeming passage of light into a purer world,—the ship's head was pointed, and as she rose on the gigantic crests of each billow, her bowsprit, jib-boom and spritsail-yard, with all their delicate and nicely stretched gear, might be seen to intervene with the striking contrast of the deepest shadow opposed to the strongest light. Human life with all its ranging phases, changes not more fleetly than did these hues in the heavens, until having waned through all the successive tints enumerated, the spot where they had so glowingly coruscated was no longer distinguishable from the rest of the threatening firmament. With a sinking heart, and a feeling of coming evil unaccountable to himself, the Admiral turned toward the quarter-deck, where his eye encountered the figure of Græme emerging from the hatchway, having

on each side of him a corporal of marines with a drawn bayonet.

His dress was disordered, his face swollen, his eyes red, and an air of stupor and insensibility seemed to hang about him.

“What is the reason, Sir, that you are absent from your quarters when the drum beats?” was sharply demanded by the captain. Græme regarded his superior mutely for a few seconds, his eyes seemed to roll in their sockets, and his mouth, on which the foam of emotion was yet apparent, moved, but no answer was heard save a low inarticulate moan.

“Why, you are drunk, Sir!” returned the captain with an oath.

“I am not,” replied the carpenter, in a sullen and somewhat savage tone.

“Then let me see you walk a plank.”

Now to render this operation intelligible to the general reader, I must remark, that the decks of vessels are composed of planks from six to nine inches broad, placed longitudinally from head to stern. The seams being caulked with pitch, present a strongly marked black line, between two of which Græme was now desired to walk, without de-

viating on either side to the right or left. Stepping on the plank pointed out, he commenced the ordeal with his face towards the bow, the officers looking on to detect any faltering. The first three steps were firm and bold, the fourth discovered some unsteadiness, he tottered on one side, then with a sudden exertion recovered himself, and again proceeded—once more he wavered, and stretching out his left arm, had nearly recovered his balance, when the ship gave a sudden lee-lurch, his sight failed him—he missed his footing—fell on his knee, and rolled along the deck, while his forehead, coming in contact with a carronade, bled profusely. Suddenly springing up, he glared wildly around him. A fierce unsettled meaning was apparent in his eye, it rested on the captain, banishing the latent smile of pleasure from the mouth of the latter, who hurriedly exclaimed “Corporals, your bayonets—take him below. Master at arms, put Charles Græme in the report for drunkenness.”

A look almost maniacal, gleamed on his countenance for a moment, and then self-possession seeming to return, the carpenter sullenly folded his arms on his breast, and allowed himself to be

conducted below to his late cabin; where, overwhelmed with grief, he had been lying in a state of mental torpor, and thus the beat to quarters was unheard. On his absence being discovered he was sent for—the reader knows the result. I need not explain the appearances of inebriety—so far from that, he had tasted no food since breakfast, and that which an indiscriminating tyrant had set down as the effects of drinking, was in reality the paralysing results of intense sorrow.

Scarcely conscious of what had passed, he entered the miserable den, and flinging himself on the bed, buried his face in the pillow, while despair usurped the place of reason, and dark images of revenge, bloodshed, and death, rapidly chased one another through the withered field of his imagination, like fiends issuing forth from a volcano in eruption, and disporting on the burning sea of lava at its base.

He had lain thus about half an hour, when a tap was heard at the door. No one answered—again—the same—a third—still silent—it was then pushed back by the intruder, and he entered, saying in a gruff voice, where a slight foreign

accent was perceptible, "What cheer? Um!—they've made a clear berth of it"—then as his eye wandered round, it discovered by the aid of the lamp—for here daylight never penetrated—the figure of Græme, as described. Seating himself by the bedside, the stranger took off his hat, stroked his hair once or twice, and after looking round pretty narrowly, reconnoitred the enemy's country sufficiently to forage out a glass of grog. This he drank with great gusto, eyed the spirit-bottle to see that he had left sufficient for his friend, stretched out a long and muscular pair of legs, and finally, pulling forth a tin box darkened by age, put into his mouth from thence a piece of tobacco. All this was evidently preparatory to some great undertaking,—accordingly these preliminaries being settled, the hair of his head smoothed down once more, he gave Græme a gentle shake on the shoulder, saying, "Holloa, Mr. Græme! Holloa here, shipmate! cheer up; cheer up—though ye may be off a lee-shore, there's room to work her yet."

The person addressed lifted his head, stared for a few seconds in silence, and then resumed his former position.

After a few more ineffectual attempts, the stranger succeeded in gaining Græme's attention—"Yes, my boy, take my words, I that know what I'm talking about, this ship 'll no more reach England, than you and I will be messing to-morrow at the Admiral's table!"

"No, Kavanagh," replied Græme, "no, I have my doubts; but then our woes will be ended!"

"'Ended,' Mr. Græme! and do *you* talk like that—you think what they've done for ye! They knabb'd ye, took ye away, brought ye to this—and you won't be odds and evens with them?"

"No, Kavanagh, no; I ought not. Mutiny, as concerns ourselves, may only end in our destruction: but consider to how many more it may bring death."

"Well, well—maybe you're right! I've only been a pricking the matter out; though to be sure you're an odd chap. First they press ye—"

"For God's sake, Kavanagh, do not remind me of my sufferings. The Lord knows I am a maddened man, and scarcely mind where I am, or what I am, save that I'm pulled down to the ground by misfortune; I only wish to die in a quiet way."

“ Yes, Mr. Græme, very true—I’m not a-going to remind ye agin your will, don’t fear. Maybe I was wrong—you weren’t pressed——”

“ Alas, I was! and oh, Kavanagh, you—if ever, you loved a girl—may fancy what it was to be torn away from her leaving two children——”

“ Aye, but Mister Græme, they’ll do very well ashore,” said the seaman, while an expression of cunning played round his lips.

Græme started up, his frame trembled, while the haggard countenance was suddenly illumed with the dilated eye of phrensy. Placing his hand on the other’s shoulder, he eagerly scanned his countenance, to see if this ignorance of his misfortunes was assumed;—but the cunning of Kavanagh had not been put on that morning for the first time; no feeling was allowed to be apparent save wondering ignorance, that invited the injured man to pour out all his sufferings into a friendly bosom.

“ What! Kavanagh? ‘do very well ashore!’—She’s dead—she’s hung——” he at length articulated, with a suppressed scream of voice. “ My wife—the wife of my youth! she whom I left honest, industrious, virtuous—faithful, loving, beautiful—

is hung!—a convicted, executed felon—my children, born in plenty—who would have been reared in comfort, and the fear of God—are orphans—work-house orphans, dependent for the dirtiest crumb of bread they eat—they were starving—they were naked, their mother gave to feed and clothe them her life—her name—her husband—her love—all—and yet they will be bred to infamy!! Read that”—giving him his wife’s letter.

Kavanagh perused it in affected wonder, though a third person might have detected a smile of dark meaning still lurking round his mouth as he said, “Well Mr. Græme, and who’s to blame?”—

“To blame?—Are you a man?—do you know what it is to be a parent—a husband; and ask me that? Who could be to blame, but the infernal law grinding the poor to protect the rich, ravishing from their homes and kindred the industrious, to spill their blood with privation and hardship that the wealthy and the lazy may enjoy themselves without fear? Who could be to blame but those who”——

“Took away your warrant, Mr. Græme.”

“Right, yes, those are the villains who——”

“When a man’s beside himself for downheartedness, make him walk a plank, and if the ship

rolls, put him into the report for drunkenness, to be flogged next morning."

Græme regarded the speaker with an incredulous stare. "Do you mean me, Kavanagh?"

"It's much to me if I should mane any one else?"

"How do you make that out?"

"Why you heard the captain order your name to be put down in the report, and I who happened to be close to him at my gun, heard him tell the first lieutenant he'd flog you to morrow"——

"Never, though every drop of blood in my body goes for it."

"Now, don't be rash Mr. Græme"——

"Rash—what then! When they have made me the widower of a felon, and my children orphans, shall I let them add every bodily insult which man can inflict on brutes?"

"Ah, Mr. Græme, you're in a passion."

"I'm cool."

"Yes, I'll swear to it!"

"You doubt? Then I will swear,—ay, swear by the Being who made me,—and allowed me to be so tried, that rather than suffer this last pitiful piece of their tyranný, though the destruction of myself be linked with it, I will resist it to the last!"

saying which, he pressed to his lips the holy volume, which was lying near him.

This was the consummation for which Kavanagh had watched.—“Give me your hand, Mr. Græme. The serpent never dies without having a sting for it, and you, who every man in the ship knows to be one of the best hands in her, to be trampled on worse than a riptyle without turning, is too bad for here or there. You may take my word for something, there’s many an honest hand in this ship as ’ll stand by to the last. This ship ’ll never reach England, that’s plain,—she’s as leaky now as a washerwoman’s tub sun-dried, and we’ve only cleared a fortnight yet out of six months, and if a fellow is to go to Davy Jones, it’s all as well to make the land with clear scores,—let alone being flogged like an unfaling stanchion. There’s one comfort, if so be we do go, old blue beard will bear us company. So cheer up, Mr. Græme, cheer up, there’s some stout hearts in the old ship yet, when things come to the push ; and now good night to ye, shipmate !”—saying which, the artful mutineer, having gained the end he sought, hastily withdrew.

“But Kavanagh, Kavanagh,” said Græme, following.

“Holloa, shipmate? what ye hailing for?”

“You have my letter.”

“Ah, maybe I have,” he replied, hesitating. “I thought, perhaps, I might just shew it to one or two messmates for’ard, to let ’em see what his Majesty’s sarvice *can* do on a pinch.” Græme paused—“Well, maybe you wouldn’t like them to know how you’ve been served?”

“Not like it?—then take the letter, shew it where you please, what blame shall rest on me? And say that old England confers on those who fight for her a triple favour—enslaving them—hanging their wives and beggaring their children!”—Then turning towards his cabin with the seeds which the tempter had just sown, already quickening into life, he again gave himself up to that indulgence of the soul most dangerous to all—the brooding over its afflictions.

No sooner had Kavanagh arrived on the lower deck, than he met a seaman exclaiming, “Here’s a pretty kettle of fish!”

“Why, how now?”—

“How now? Why there’s the skipper’s just a throw’d the twenty-ninth mess-cat overboard, cause the Admiral caught it a playing with the prisoner

on deck, Mr. * * *. Who can expect good luck after that?"—

"Ah, the devil's children have their father's luck! But that be bad enough for us after all. Why don't they begin and fling us overboard next?—Fling the twenty-ninth mess-cat overboard!—By the piper that played before Moses, I'd as soon a see'd the parson driving alongside to leeward."

"For shame, my man, never speak profanely of your betters—the night's cold—it blows hard too—there's a wild sea running, I'd much rather see the cat there, indeed I would. Never murmur, my man, at the dispensation of fate; but remember—its all for the best"—and with this admonition, the chaplain,—for it was himself who after visiting the sick ladies had stumbled on Kavanagh—trundled off his portly figure into the calm retreats of the gun-room, supporting himself with every stanchion on the way.

CHAPTER VII.

“ I’ve partisans for peril’s day !
Think not I am what I appear ;
I’ve arms and friends and vengeance near.”

“ You must not go down on the orlop deck, Sir, I had orders to place you on the lower deck with Collins”—said the corporal of marines, who was conducting the prisoner first introduced to the reader’s notice at the beginning of this volume, to his place of confinement. For some days past he had been reinstated in his old quarters, the tarpaulin hutch on the poop; but as there was every appearance of a gale coming on, and the said hutch being in the way, he was removed to the lower-deck, to be again placed in irons, accompanied by his usual guard, two marines with drawn bayonets. “ Now, Sir, will ye give me your leg ?”

“ Oh certainly ! Will one be sufficient for the safety of the ship ; or must you have both ?”

“ Aha ! your honour ! You being sober, one

foot in the bilboes 'll do; but I being six sheets in the wind, and not able to stand, must have two," interrupted a seaman, named Collins, who, as the reader will remember, brought part of his provisions to his persecuted superior, when confined on the poop, at Bombay, and who was now sitting upright against the gun-room bulk-head, with his feet chained to one end of the long iron bar, the other extremity of which was about to be graced by the said young officer himself.

"Well, Collins, for what may you be here?" inquired the officer.

"What, your honour—nothing at all, as I can see—a little in the wind or so, maybe—but, your honour, nothing more than usual: nothing more. The skipper says I'm drunk: skipper tells a fib. Who threw the cat overboard?—he'd better jump over after her. What luck ever came a ship for flinging a cat overboard? We'll see, we'll see.

"My name d'ye see's Tom Tough, I've seen no little sarvice;

"With a yo heave ho!"

No your honour,

'I've heard o' Billy Blue,

A sailor tight and true,

As ever knotted yarn or'—

Never fling cats overboard.—Did your honour ever hear o' Billy Blue?"

“No, Collins.”

“Ah, Sir, Billy went to glory, all for flinging a cat overboard!”

“Let’s hear the story, Tom, for we’ve time and space for it”—and here, while the sufferings and adventures of Billy Blue are rehearsed, we must beg to take the reader elsewhere.

Having obtained the letter of Mary Græme to her husband, Kavanagh, whose sole aim was to stir the men up to some open breach of discipline, proceeded to disseminate its contents round the ship duly commented and enlarged upon; bringing in the Admiral’s speech to the native shipwrights, the leaky state of the ship, the threatening aspect of the weather, and finally the cruelty of throwing “the twenty-ninth mess-cat” overboard. The general reader may here be inclined to smile at such a cause of complaint—he would be still more astonished, could he actually witness the effect which such an act would have on board a ship. Sailors have two particular objects on which they seem spontaneously to bestow every kindness and affection—females, and “dumb creatures.” The first may lead a seaman as they like; and the second are sure of experiencing—to the

utmost extent which man's nature permits—every protection and care—though the inhabitants of the deep meet with less of it than any other class in the creation.

Every one is aware of the great hold which superstition has over the character of the sailor; and this is one, "That nothing can be productive of greater woes than cruelty to a cat." Every preparation having been made for a stormy night, much surprise was excited by the gradual decrease of the wind, which silently died away, like a torrent when its fall of waters has been discharged. Within five hours after quarters had taken place (a little before midnight) not a breath seemed to be stirring on the mirror of the deep; the sails flapped heavily on the masts, and the immense mass of iron and wood-work which the unruffled tides buoyed up, rolled heavily on the long seas, not as yet subsided. "The air a solemn stillness held"; and yet the solemnity of the moment had mixed up with it an indescribable, sullen, oppressive feeling, which carried dread to the hearts of those who witnessed it. The clouds had not broken up, but there they hung all dark and heavily. A strange electrical reddish grey

might be seen in one quarter of the heavens, under which was discovered the brig, appearing like a speck in the distance.

“Twelve o’clock, Sir,” said the sentry, putting his head up the hatchway to report the hour.

“Strike the bell,” returned the officer.—“Boatswain’s mate, call the next watch.”

Eight strokes were heard on the ship’s bell; but the hour of midnight followed by the pipe, had scarcely ceased to undulate over the restless waste, when the attention of every one on deck was suddenly arrested.

A brilliant glare of light was observed to gleam forth from that part of the heavens where the brig was last observed to be. It was not lightning, so much as a dazzling and splendid coruscation. This had scarcely passed away, when a low hollow murmur was faintly distinguished—the ear at first doubted whether it was a sound or a deception. Then it grew louder, resembling the distant roar of surf on a lee-shore. With terror in their countenances the men eyed one another, involuntarily and simultaneously exclaiming, “Breakers!” But again, they were distant from any land—the noise increased, while the

point from whence it came again exhibited a bright light, distinguishable through which was for a moment beheld the black speck of the brig—the ocean seemed to be on fire; the tumult increased; the long line of vivid light on the distant horizon rapidly approached with supernatural swiftness; the agitated surface of the waters lashed into fury, seemed more appropriate to Pandemonium than our globe,—the sailors looked aloft to the canvass, expecting to see the close-reefed top-sails blown out of their bolt-ropes. The Admiral, who had hastily come out from his cabin, stood on the carronade slide in speechless bewilderment, gazing on the coming tempest; the captain, with his fear-blanchèd face, cowered behind his superior; the men from below, alarmed at the awful noise, which now surpassed the roar of the hottest action, came rushing on deck in their night-dresses, while the awe-stricken countenances palely illumed by the dull-reflected glare, made it seem rather like a resurrection of the dead than a congregation of the living.

To add still further to the horror of the scene the top-sails, which had been lowered on the cap, in expectation of the squall, hung unmoved. Not

a point, not a gasket betrayed the slightest motion. No breath was felt to cool the faces which the sultry air had parched, and which expectation fevered—the roll of the long seas seemed chained; the rest of the ocean appeared as a polished glass, while a quick, steady, tremulous shivering was felt throughout the ship's hull, and her crew momentarily expected the abyss to yawn and close on them for ever.

Thus, then, they remained staring with distended eyeballs on the approaching confusion of the waters, that traversed miles in seconds, and left distance far behind in its luminous career. No human voice was distinguishable; their breasts throbbed, their pulses seemed clogged with the heavy-laboured breath they drew as it came near. Some chemical decomposition of the atmosphere seemed to take place, as if those particles replete with life, which it once contained, had vanished; they inhaled the air, and yet it seemed to mock them, leaving behind the pangs of suffocation.—In an instant more, and it had overtaken them.—As far as the eye could reach, a-head or a-stern, all was one stream of fire and foam, while the same view presented itself on either side for a considerable way.—The brine boiled up around

them, mounting the gangway and splashing in the faces of those whose curiosity had led them too near. Still the air was unmoved—the sense of suffocation intense, while the ship trembled beneath their feet, as if endowed with the living and animate comprehension of her terrified crew.

Gradually the bubble, hiss, and then the roar subsided, rolling and murmuring away into the opposite direction to that from whence it had appeared. No sooner, however, was its last gleam visible in what had been the lee horizon, and the faint retiring hum no longer distinguishable, than a second glare was perceived in the spot whence arose the first, followed by the same wonderful phenomena, continuing until the morning, during which time the scene was renewed five times; though in each succeeding repetition of the electric light, the eye assisted by the night-glass vainly attempted to descry the brig—she was seen no more. Nor when the morning dawned was she to be observed from the mast-head. With returning daylight these strange appearances ceased, while the gale which they had interrupted, seemed about to revive.

No sooner did the first numbing effects of terror

cease to paralyse the minds of the men, than the angry feelings which were prior in existence sprung up with redoubled acrimony.

Kavanagh, who, be it remarked, was undergoing a sentence of fourteen years' hard service in the navy for smuggling on his native coast of Galway, had assembled several of the most riotous of the crew in the *bey** on the lower deck, and after holding forth to them on the glories of freeing themselves from tyranny, and the advantages to be derived from running away with the ship, went on to say—"As for the matter o' them terrible sights last night—ripples! Talk of ripples!† Did ripples ever sink a ship? and if the brig's not sunk, where is she? I've seen ripples afore now. I tell ye, shipmates, 'tis a judgment for cruelty to dumb animals; 'tis a warning—and if so-be you let the Admiral keep command o'this ship twenty-four hours more, when night comes on again, take my word for it, down she goes."

"Aye, is it a warning," said an old quarter-

* "*Bey*"—fore part of a ship's deck.

† This description of the irregular and unaccountable phenomenon denominated "*ripples*," is not exaggerated; for a corroboration of it, see "*Edinburgh Philosophical Journal*."

master, who also officiated as a navigation school-master to the youngsters; “forbye that thae sinfu’ men wha work the work o’Beelzebub, are but true children o’Baal, doing a’ abominations, and striping their brither-sufferers—lang has their tyranny cried out agin them, and now the Lord delivers them a’ into the net o’the fowler.—Strike and spare none o’them—they ha’ left me without kith or kin, and so will I them. My last bairn have I seen glinting down through the saut tide, to rest nae mortal kens where; and will he not avenge the fatherless?”

“Aye, M’Pherson,” interposed Kavanagh, “you’re not the only one among us that has to thank them in that sort. Here,” showing Græme’s letter, “is not this a skreel might stir the blood of ere a man in the ship? Is not a murdered wife and starved piccaninnies, who cared or wanted for nothing at-all, at-all, enough cause to pull them down, every living son of them!”

“Strike, I say; down with the blood-thirsty villains! Who shall doubt that we’re commanded?—Was it not put forth in thae awfu’ lightnings o’last night?—Is it not by this precious bit testament o’suffering that ye are to be testified and sworn?” holding forth the letter.

“Aye, swear!” burst forth from the rest: “and so will we all.”—The old man kissed the letter as he finished the form of adjuration that bound him to mutiny, and thus fanaticism completed what wrongs and passion had begun.

They were now pledged; the first fatal step had been taken; the first leak in the dam had been sprung—the impetuous and confined torrent was soon to burst its way. Having consulted among themselves as to what steps they should next take, they resolved to surround the ship’s bell and fling it overboard, thinking thereby to cause confusion throughout the ship. They next enticed the sentry from his post, and consigned his hour-glass to the same fate. While the sweepers of the decks tacitly declined to do their duty, open murmurs were heard among the men at the pumps, where unceasingly for the last forty hours four gangs had been kept constantly at work. The nauseous and unwholesome water, the needless risk to which the Admiral had exposed them by coming to sea in an unworthy ship; the bad luck which the drowning of the cat was supposed to have drawn down; the terrifying phenomena of the preceding night, and the cruel

effects of the tyranny of the service, as exemplified in the case of Græme; all were vehemently and intemperately discussed.

These matters soon found their way to the ears of the captain, and thence to the Admiral, whose ultimate determination was to suppress, with a strong hand, the mutiny as yet in bud. For this purpose the serjeants of marines, as well as their superior officers, were summoned to his presence, and after a long exhortation to do their duty, and a warning as to the consequences of insubordination, the Admiral opened his escrutoire, and taking from thence a small canvass bag, whose chinking, as it was placed on the table, proclaimed its golden contents, said, "Here, serjeants, is a guinea for every man in the company, double that sum for the corporals, and thrice for yourselves: do your duty boldly, and stick by your officers and the laws of your country, and when this ship reaches England, besides the rewards which your country may bestow, I'll divide amongst you double this amount. Now go below; see that a dozen rounds of ball-cartridge are served out to each man, and when all hands are called, mind that your muskets are loaded—but remember, not

a word of this beyond your own men." Having then caused as many small arms to be placed in the poop cabin as could well be effected without exciting alarm, the ship's company went to breakfast.

The calm which had distinguished the preceding night had, at an early hour of the morning, resigned its dominion over the waves to the more general sway of the winds; and at nine A. M. it blew so strong, and in such gusts, that it was thought necessary to strike the top-gallant masts. The hands had scarcely been called for this purpose, when a sudden squall heeling the old ship over, rent her fore and mizen topsails, while the greater part of the one at the main was blown clean away. When the time occupied by replacing these sails, and repairing the injured gear, had elapsed, noon arrived—sunless noon, without one ray of Apollo's orb being visible to brighten the surrounding gloom, or inform them of the latitude in which they were now sailing. On the instant that the watch is called and the dinner of the crew concluded, it is customary to sweep the decks. This duty is taken in turns. On this day it fell to the lot of Collins, who had been released from

irons, and who on being summoned to discharge this office replied, "Well, your honour, sweeping decks is all very kiddy in its way, but lor, sir, where's the use of sweeping a ship that's so soon to be at the bottom?"

"Bottom! you scoundrel—do your duty, get your broom this instant."

"Why your honour, thank ye, if it's all as one to you, I'd as lief let it alone." The officer stared in surprise.

"You mutinous scoundrel, do you refuse to do it?"

"No, your honour, oh no!" shaking his head, with a grin, "Only I'm feard I don't know how to do it!"

"Not know, sir? Why how did you do it this morning?"

"This morning, your honour? Aye, but it's after dinner now,—had my grog—always forgets after tasting grog; but perhaps your honour 'll freshen the nip, and shew me the way a little?" saying which, the seaman took his old worn-out broom from its place, and put it into his officer's hand, who seizing it in a tremendous passion, swung it round and dashed the end of it in Collins's face. The

half inebriated smile on the features of the latter gave way to anger, and then resumed its supremacy; but when the officer advanced to repeat the blow, Collins, who scarcely dared to strike his superior, held forth his arm as if to ward it off, then managing to stumble, he fell upon the officer's shoulder, and by an expert movement pulled the latter down, and rolled his huge carcass upon his prostrate enemy. While the midshipman was venting his rage, Collins slowly arose, and masking his secret satisfaction under a look of extreme penitence said,

"I beg your honour's pardon, hope you're not hurt—but these here parverse incidents will happen in the best o' riggilated families."

The answer to this hope was comprised in some half a dozen kicks, with the order, "You scoundrel, sweep the decks!"

"Oh your honour! don't go to mention such a thing."

"Sweep them this instant, or I'll report you to the captain."

"Thank your honour!" returned Collins, touching his hat, and then turning his back, he took two steps to the main hatchway and walked below.

The midshipman had now no alternative but to transmit this act of insubordination to the captain, and thence to the Admiral. The result was, to determine the latter officer to carry into execution the punishment which the "untoward" weather of the morning had arrested.

Those who have lived long must frequently have remarked, that the tidings of joy are often delayed until too late to refresh the sufferer, while the note of forthcoming woe or sadness can find in every one a tongue to give it utterance.

The pipe "all hands" was no sooner heard along the decks, than every soul on board felt what was forthcoming. Many were the emotions to which it gave birth; among the rest a dogged determination for resistance. Quickly the crowd poured forth upon the upper-deck; the seamen—of whom there were about seven hundred,—standing on the fore part of the upper-deck in a semicircle. Farther aft, on the starboard, which was also the lee-side, were drawn up in three close files all the marines, their rear covered by the quarter-deck bulwark, while their flank rested on one of the gun carriages, where the men had been faced about towards the ship's company two deep. This step

of preparation the sailors were, from their ignorance of military tactics, unable to attribute to its right source—if they noticed it at all. On the larboard or weather side of the quarter-deck, were gathered all the officers with their cocked-hats and swords, the captain standing in front. Before him or near the ship's side, a grating lay upon the deck, perpendicularly on which was placed a second, slanting gradually, till the upper end rested back on the main-rigging, to the Jacob's ladder, of which it was secured. On the deck beside it, were placed two handles seemingly like distaffs covered, one with green, the other with red baize; while fastened to one end were several long white cords now quietly twisted round the stems, but which had often in times past scored their gory wales upon the shoulders of those whose acts had never deserved at once the ignominy of slaves with the pain of martyrs. All was silent, save the rising winds that sullenly whistled through the rigging—the waves that came rolling on the ship's bends, and then with a low murmuring plash fell back divided, into the frothy bosom of their parent sea. All was silent, save the constant clang-clang of the pumps on the deck below, that drew up the

dark water from her hold, and sent it gurgling through the lee-scuppers. This pause lasted for a minute; the captain being then convinced that every one was present, turned to his clerk, who gave him a small paper. Looking towards two men who were under the custody of the master at arms and the marines, he pronounced the name Thomas Collins.

“Aye, aye, Sir,” replied the seaman, without changing a muscle of his countenance, and then giving his waistband a hitch, he stepped up to the captain, took his hat off and remained stationary.

“Strip!” was the only emphatic syllable which his superior designed to pronounce. The order was executed, and the seaman stood before them disrobed of all except the loose canvass trowsers that hung round his loins, while the sun-burnt back and shoulders exposed to view might have done honour to an Atlas.

“Tie him up,” was the next order. Here Collins looked towards the ship’s company; a contraction of his eye-brows, and an odd leer were visible on his countenance, as he said in an under voice, “Now’s your time, my boys.” A low but general murmur was the only answer,

of this no notice was taken, and the culprit having been securely seized (or tied) with rope-yarns, at both hands and knees, the captain advanced one step. "Thomas Collins, I am going to punish you for drunkenness and insubordination. You were in irons for the first offence yesterday, you were guilty of the second to-day." A moment's pause was allowed for any defence the prejudged culprit might choose to make—he was silent. The article of war which he had violated was then read, and the captain, looking to the boatswain's mate, said "Do your duty."

When Collins had received four dozen without a word, and many of the last without even a motion, save the involuntary threeping of the lacerated muscles, the captain nodded to the master-at-arms, saying, "Cast him off." Collins quietly turned round his head towards his superior, and with an indescribable air of drollery said, "Thank ye, your honour, thank ye, I was just a dozing off to sleep."* A suppressed laugh among the crew, and a look of rage from the captain, was the effect of this sally; the latter ordering the boatswain's mate to give him two dozen more, which failing to move his stoicism, he was at length liberated.

* A fact.

This offender being disposed of, all eyes were turned towards him who yet remained in custody.

“Charles Græme,” said the captain, addressing the disgraced carpenter—for it was he—in a voice that caused each hearer to start.

“Sir!” replied the man of sorrow, in tones that were scarcely audible. Those unacquainted with his character might have attributed the pallid hue on his countenance to fear, and the tottering of his steps to dismay. Alas! it was only the fine-strung sensitiveness of the bow, whose extreme tension either sends its arrow to the head, or destroys itself in the attempt.

When he had taken up his position before the captain, with his hat in his hand, the latter again said, “Strip!”

For a moment a wild hesitation was visible in the carpenter’s manner, then dropping on one knee before his officer, he said, with an imploring accent, “Captain Grummet, I am not aware of any fresh offence that should subject me to this punishment; but your honour knows the late dreadful tidings have been more than sufficient to drive me into acts that at another time would have been farthest from my thoughts. If I have

been so unfortunate as to do this, Captain Grummet—and you must be the best judge, for I have had no senses to know myself—I pray your honour so far to show me mercy, and not inflict on me the mark of the cat. Your honour knows that once flogged, no future behaviour of mine can wipe out the disgrace. I am not of sufficient importance, I know, to ask for a court-martial; but give me the black-list, stop my grog, Captain Grummet, or inflict any other punishment, however severe, and for the short term of life that is left, I will bear it all cheerfully.”

“Get up, sir.”

“Captain Grummet do hear me, do listen to me, as you may ask your God to hear your death-bed prayer; if not for me, at least for the memory of—her—of my poor—mur—” he could not name that sacred tie before such tyrants. “Your honour, is not grief natural? Can we avoid what’s in us? You yourself, had you suffered such a loss, must have felt as much. I was not drunk—I was not—it was but sorrow!”

“Sir,” said the captain, who at some parts of the appeal had shown signs of relenting—“do as

I order you, strip—strip,” stamping his foot on the deck.

“For the love of mercy, for Heaven’s sake, Captain Grummet,” catching his superior’s hand, “drive me not to madness.”

“‘Madness,’ you beast!” snatching the hand away as if polluted. “The cat will take the madness out of you—get up, you rascal, this instant!” and he inflicted a kick on the suppliant form before him.

A gleam of rage flashed forth on Græme’s features, and was as suddenly subdued. “Captain, for the love of Heaven, if——”

“Here, master-at-arms, serjeants, take this villain up; seize him to the gratings.” Four men immediately stepped out to obey this order, and having raised Græme, they were dragging him towards the grating, when he turned about to the captain once more, and stretching out his hands,—“Captain Grummet, since you are deaf to my abject entreaties, since you are not to be moved by my sufferings, since even the name of God may not incline you to mercy, I appeal to you as a sailor, by the memory of my murdered wife——”

“Your wife, fellow.—What has the thievish strumpet to do with——”

“Liar, liar—it’s false!” roared the outraged husband, springing with the strength of a tiger from the puny arms of those who attempted to hold him, while in further imitation of that animal, the blow of his right hand, with all the force which the volition of his huge body had given to it, came full in the captain’s face. He fell senseless on the deck. In an instant thirty swords were pointed at the throat of him who, with his left foot firmly planted on his captain’s breast and his right hand wielding a cutlass that he had hastily snatched from those placed round the capstan, now defied them all, and seemed to court the death that hurtled round him.

Meanwhile the crew, who had been gradually drawing near, all warmly excited by the open tyranny perpetrated on one so universally respected, no sooner beheld the first blow struck, than they rushed forward in a body with the cries of “Hurra! my hearties, down with the ——, down with them! true blue for ever!” Each man now seizing whatever weapon came to hand, it was one scene of irretrievable confusion and carnage.

The first momentary dismay at the furious attack of such a mass having in the course of a few seconds worn off, the officers, though few in number, found themselves better armed, and possessed at least of an equal chance in the fight, when the door of the poop cabin was suddenly thrown open, and the Admiral rushed out in full uniform, bearing his sword in one hand and his pistol presented in the other. In that voice of confidence and command which seemed to consider nothing as lost while one chance out of many offered for restoration, he exclaimed to the combatants, "Men! return to your duty. In the name of the King, I command you, marines, wheel to the right and charge; prepare to fire on all those who do not instantly throw down their arms and return aft to their duty.—Fire—marines, charge and fire!"

This prompt order was obeyed, and while the murderous volleys were yet ringing along the deck, the military officers, who as passengers had hitherto remained below, now gathering what arms they could, came springing up through the after hatch-way, and thus as it were turned the flank of the mutineers. So enchainng is custom;

so long will discipline retain her hold, that even after she is deprived of any physical power to enforce her commands, the empty words will be obeyed. Thus the sudden appearance of the Admiral dressed with the insignia of his rank, his intrepid bearing, looks of defiance, and prompt commands, startled the seamen more than one could have expected; and when the marines opening their fire, and aiding their discipline with that formidable weapon, the bayonet, proved to them the inequality of their combat, they hesitated—the Admiral's call to return to their duty—the appearance of the military officers at the after hatchway, and their comrades strewing the deck around them, decided the matter—those who as yet had taken no share in the transaction came aft, and the rest wisely fled to take shelter on the lower deck, until they could provide themselves with arms. After having addressed a few words to the men who remained with him, the Admiral, taking advantage of the panic, instantly led the way to the main deck, and with his own hands helped to batten the mutineers down below.

“Now then, Captain Grummet,” said he, “lose no time—spike every gun on this deck.”—

"I fear, Sir, the spikes are in the armourer's bench below."

"Well then, nails, get nails, Captain Grummet, and drive one into every touch-hole — carry off every cutlass and pistol — aye, and every tomahawk to the poop; don't leave the villains one claw to scratch with more than possible—I'll teach them what it is to mutiny, the rascals! I have them all safe under hatches.—We can't be more than three days' sail from the Isle of France; once there, and I'll string them all on a gantline, though I use a seven-inch hawser to do it."*

While thus consoling himself with hopes of vengeance, and attending to every thing that could tend to realize them, the Admiral seemed but to draw fresh vigour from circumstances that would have appalled a less determined heart. Having seen his last orders executed, and placed men of his own party at the pumps, where the leaks from the increasing gale gained ground, as well as stationed sentries at the various hatchways, he returned to the quarter-deck, mustered his party, which with seamen, officers, and marines, amounted

* "Gantline," a rope running round the ship from yard-arm to yard-arm, but never rove (or put up) except to dry clothes or hammocks.

to four hundred and twenty men, marked as among the mutineers those who were absent, and then proceeded to fortify the poop-deck as a retreat. This finished, and the decks cleared of the bodies which the fire of the marines had left upon it, the Admiral stepped into the little turret on the gang-way to scrutinize the weather. The hour was now about three, but the dark threatening sky flung so dismal a gloom over the disturbed ocean, that it might have been deemed much later.

As those eyes which long service had inured to scenes of suffering, once again contemplated the dark prospect before him, his mind involuntarily recalled the forebodings that assailed him while occupying the same spot on the preceding evening. In vain did he try to drown the whisper of impending fate: in vain did he strain that hawk's glance to pierce the dim hazy atmosphere now reddened with the coming storm, or to descry the brig, or any traces of fellow life at hand. Vainly did fancy try to cheat the sense by imagining out of airy nothingness the distant land of the Isle of France;—vainly did he say “all will be well, I will subdue it.”—No! in the lurid scene around, he beheld the ominous pall of destiny, while the bois-

terous wind sighing through the mazes of the rigging and the wild world of waters tumbling before him, told him—if not audibly, yet faithfully,—that he was alone—struggling on the treacherous desert of the ocean against the retribution of his God, and the vengeance of his fellow creatures.—Rash mortal! now that the bolt had left his hand, he wished to recall it; and when too late for aught save resolution, his soul of pride misgave him.

CHAPTER VIII.

“ And she was lost, and yet I breathed,
But not the breath of human life;
A serpent round my heart was wreathed,
And stung my every thought to strife.

* * * * *

There's blood upon that dented sword,
A stain its steel can never lose.”

To return to the mutineers. When they beheld how unequal was the combat, they, as the reader knows, betook themselves to the lower-deck, while Græme, who, in the scuffle had been knocked down the after-hatchway, was pulled by some of his comrades down with them. As he was but slightly stunned and free from any wound, he soon regained full possession of his faculties. When in the first confusion and darkness of the lower-deck, the men found themselves huddled together, the natural feelings of fear and distrust began to

manifest themselves, and they were debating as to what they had better do. Some proposed a surrender,—this was scouted; others proposed inaction—this was resisted on the grounds of falling in with some other ship and being taken, when they well knew the impending fate. A third party wished to gain entire possession of the ship by opening the lower-deck ports and climbing to the main-decks; this was impracticable from the high sea now running, as well as the sure death they would meet from those on deck. At this juncture, Collins, who had just been flogged, said,

“Now hark to me, my boys, seeing ye can do nothing more ship-shape, I propose we broach the rum, get thundering groggy, blow the old barky up, and all go to Davy Jones together; in which case ye see, my boys, we’ll send that blue bearded beggar aloft, as pilot-boat, and make sail for Fiddler’s green all standing.”

This mad proposal was received with a loud huzza, and it was impossible to say how soon it might have been carried into execution, had not Græme stepped forward into the midst of them and demanded a moment’s attention. This being gained, he said :

“ My brother seamen, as I have unfortunately been the means of bringing you into this situation, it may not be out of the way—when I hear you talk of blowing the ship up—to remind you that any other alternative is in your power. I should think, from the numbers I see around me, that we have the best half among us yet.”

“ We have—we have,” shouted many voices.

“ Well then, my boys, does it remain for us to allow the few to conquer the many?”

“ No—no.”

“ That’s right. Is not man the same, whether he is Admiral—or able seaman?”

“ Yes.”

“ Then before we submit to be any longer tyrannized over, let us prefer to die. I know not what wrongs, my lads, you may each of you have to avenge, but for me,”—and his eyes glowed with the fiercest fires of fury and revenge,—“ when the service found me first, I was honest and I was happy. I had a dear wife whom I loved, as you, my boys, may do many that are now separated from you. I had children, who depended upon me for bread, but we wanted for nothing. I was torn from them all, without looking once again

to the innocent and contented home from which I was dragged for ever, or having it in my power to prevent the starvation of those I left behind. Look at this letter, shipmates. You saw the captain give it to me, you heard him read the news that my wife was—it almost breaks my heart to say it, though not from shame—yes, he read the news that my wife—was—hung. This letter she wrote a few minutes before she went to the gallows, with her baby at her breast; she was starving—her children starving—naked—perishing with cold and hunger; and yet they murdered her for trying to feed and clothe those babies whose father and supporter they had knocked down in the streets and taken off to sea!! Shipmates, is it any wonder that I should be beside myself? Is it fitting, on the day of reading such a letter as *this*, to make a man walk a plank—to call him drunk—to make him out a beast? Is it just to shut your ears to what he has to say, and flog him like a slave, not for being guilty, but because it suits his captain to pronounce him so? Are we men, are we flesh and blood, or dead inanimate clods? Shipmates, I am not telling you this to make *you* revenge the injuries

which *I* have suffered ; God forbid. I only state it before you all as the facts which have led me to strike my captain ; and then, not until the lying villain threw disgrace on one who, whatever may have been her faults, was driven to commit them by the excess of those feelings which all of you, my boys, know how to prize ; those feelings which are the dearest and the best in our nature. I merely bring up these things as a defence before God and man for the steps I am obliged to take.

“ But for you, my brother seamen, you have all suffered under the same oppression. Even now, when I look around me, when I see six hundred brave fellows driven to despair and mutiny by the brutal deeds of their superiors, without any choice but death, or any help but their cutlasses, I am sure that the greater part of you have been brought to this sad pass by the same ruffianly measures as myself.—You have either been decoyed away from your friends when too young to know the hell to which you were coming ; or you have been felled and carried off like beasts to the slaughter-house ; or you have been taken out of merchant-ships, in which you were comfortable and happy, and well paid.—You were

forced to give up every happiness or advantage which you possessed, for a life of horrible servitude and hard labour, attended by treatment, worse than such as is awarded to a condemned felon.—After years of this misery, in what condition do you now find yourselves?—You have been driven into mutiny by many and unceasing outrages; if you submit, you will gain the yard-arm for what has passed; but if we fight to the last, we shall at least have the consolation of dying like seamen, and being revenged before we die.”

“Huzza—Græme for ever.—Revenge, boys, and fight it out till all’s blue!” shouted the infuriated seamen.

“But do not come to this decision on my voice alone, lads; think it over for a minute.—If we submit, many might be pardoned; though still many would be hung. I among the foremost.—And supposing that two thirds of you should be pardoned, where would they be the gainers? They would still be compelled to pursue the same life of torture; sent to any climate, however sickly; made to obey any superior, however oppressive; and forced to fight in any quarrel, however unjust. To be goaded into a second mutiny in the one

case; or mangled and mutilated for no advantage in the second. But supposing, more favoured, you are pardoned and suffered to escape from the navy—your pensions would doubtless be lost to you; and too old to pursue any other line of life, you are left to beg, or too proud for such a fall—to starve. Even granting that you were active and young enough to enter the merchant-service; even there your escape is only for a time. Even there you are open as ever to the press-gang, and the violence of what your self-styled superiors call the laws—as if men were not sufficiently cursed and open to crime, that such laws should be made to people hell with our souls. Ask them the reason—their answer alone will convince you of the desperate pass to which you are reduced. The answer of your tyrants to such a question will be,—‘Impressment is necessary to man the navy’; and why?—Because men in the navy are treated as slaves; nay, even worse. Worms of the earth are not so trampled on as seamen; and the officers one degree above us. This, my lads—this is the reason why impressment is necessary. Who of his own free will ever entered on board a slave-galley, enchained himself for five or ten years to

an oar, and gave up the freedom which God had given to him at his birth, to suffer lashes, and imprisonment, and hardship, and abuse. They may find fools to fall into such a trap; but before they can get men in their right senses, they know very well they must arm a gang of ruffians; put a demon at their head as an officer, and give them a warrant of authority written in blood and tears, to sally forth like ravening wolves at night, tearing fathers from their families, husbands from their wives, children from their aged parents, and brothers from their unprotected sisters, making revengeful monsters of the men whose rights they have thus invaded, and leaving behind them orphans, widows, cripples, and prostitutes, to spread through their country just feelings of anger against a tyrannical government, and burden with poor-house rates those who already complain of being over-taxed. Is it, my brother seamen, to such laws as these we are called on to submit without complaint, while our dearest privileges are outraged, our freedom violated, and our lives sacrificed? Who is there among you, who, having suffered from this villany in person, can look forward to returning to his ravaged home, without

finding that the distress caused by his absence has worked everlasting shame for him in the person of some loved relative?—This is my case, and have I deserved it more than any of the brave fellows around me? And for what purpose is all this crime and evil? Solely for the support of a crime and evil but one degree less than itself. The press-gang is to support the brutal tyranny of the navy; and this tyranny they will tell you is necessary to keep in check the men supplied by the press-gang, and the refuse of the gaols which ships are obliged to accept; for now, no men who are not forced will go to sea and slavery. Again, my men, I ask of you, shall we submit every thing to these oppressors? Not only yield our persons into the hands of tyrants, but of fools—fools unable to perceive that were seamen treated like men with some degree of reason, having human frailties, but withal hearts open to kindness, the navy would then be an honourable refuge to many honest industrious men, to whom the lives of chimney-sweepers, scavengers, and hangmen, would no longer be preferable! But although *we* are not to hope for these improvements—they will arrive in some future time, when we, who might

have benefited by them are scattered in death—we have but the choice of two things—to take possession of the ship and gain some place of refuge; or to end our misery in a sailor's death and be revenged. No one, after all that we have suffered, can expect that we should prefer the lives of those who are aloft to our own—”

“No, Græme. No—never; down with them! down with the * * *.”

“One party must fall. Which has deserved it most?”

“They, they, they! Say no more, Græme; let's have at them.”

“You shall—you have been hunted to the bay; now let the hunters stand to it. My men, we are now embarked together; we have gone too far to draw back; let us be firm to each other. Do not be terrified because discipline is in array against you; but oppose it with its own children, which you are. Neither are you to fear striking him who was yesterday your officer—we are now all equal. No superiority can exist but by the mutual agreement of society—if that agreement is broken by society permitting the outrages of the press-gang, and the subsequent tyranny of our

officers, the sufferers are then freed from all responsibility and driven to a state of nature—if passive fools, they are slaughtered sheep—but if brave men and able, they are bearded lions—let those bear the blame who made them desperate; and this is justice, deny it who may—our way is now straight before us; let us pursue it at once. Do you agree to this?"

The crew assented with three loud cheers.

"Now then, choose some one as chief, and I will show him how I mean to——"

"*You—you—we'll have you !*"

"No, my men, you had better choose some one more capable."

"No, Græme; no—you're our man—Kavanagh, second, Macpherson third."

"Very well, my boys—if such is your wish, I will be the last to shrink. But, beforehand, you must all of you promise faithfully to obey me to the utmost."

"We will, my boy, we will."

"Very good. Then first go aft there, one or two of you, you'll find Mr. * * * abaft a prisoner, make him promise not to assist the Admiral or tell tales, and then let him out of the bilboes, and ask

him for his watch-bill, we'll see who's on our side for fear of mistake.—And now at once, my lads, light some more candles fore and aft here.”

This order being obeyed and the prisoner set at liberty, he gave up his watch-bill and went below to his berth. Græme then proceeded to muster all his men, amounting to five hundred and fifty, of the ablest bodied seamen in the ship. As he pronounced each name, he made the man repeat his promise of obedience and fealty. This over, he proceeded to allot to each his various task.

“Where are the gunner's crew?”

“Here we are, Sir.”

“Down below to your store-room, and see that every thing is in readiness for action; fill as many thirty-two cartridges as you can; be careful of the light room, and station two sentries outside to see that no one approaches with a glim, send up to me all the cutlasses and pistols, and use despatch. Away there, twenty of the gunner's crew, and bring up all the cutlasses and pistols. Every man take down one of each from over the guns, those who run short must get supplied from the gunners. Carpenter's crew, away to my store-room and

get up all the adzes.—Aft here, all of you who are quartered at the gun-room guns—slip their breechings, knock down the bulk-heads and get them forward before the pumps, bear a hand, but do the thing steadily, and mind in the roll of the ship, not to crush one another—we'll show the old tyrant aloft what six hundred brave hearts can do when they set about it.”

No sooner had Græme taken the lead upon himself, than the scene was changed, a vast number of lights along the whole deck gave it a brilliant and animated appearance, while the gleams falling on the swarm of rude figures so busily employed, might—to one who knew that the end of their avocation was slaughter and death—well have conveyed the idea of Pandemonium with its inhabitant imps of darkness at work.

“ Here, Sir, here are all the cutlasses and pistols,” said the men, flinging down at the feet of Græme whole heaps of those murderous instruments, while every one obeyed him with cheerful alacrity, having been accustomed ever since he joined the ship, to regard him as their superior officer, not to mention the influence acquired over their minds by the readiness and address for his

present station, which he now displayed. For even *he* forgot his griefs awhile, and gave up his whole soul to the cause in hand. Stooping, he selected from the quantities before him the arms which seemed most trustworthy ; the others did the same.

“ Now, my lads, are you all armed ? ” he demanded.

“ All—all.”

“ Have you each four rounds of pistol cartridge ? ”

“ Yes.”

“ That’s right, my boys.—Then listen to me—I want a hundred men from among you for a disagreeable duty”—

“ Here’s one.”

“ Here’s another.”

“ Here—here—here ” responded three times that number of voices.

“ But are all of you ready for this duty ? ”

“ All.”

“ Very good, then step aside here—three and three—so—Macpherson ? ”

“ Sir.”

“ Take these hundred men, they are as good as

the best of us ; place thirty-five at the fore-hatchway, twenty-five at the after-hatchway, and forty at the main ; and let no soul come down who does not give the pass-word—and that is, ‘ Vengeance for a murdered wife.’ ”—Here he was interrupted by a deafening shout—“ This is the post of honour ”—he continued, “ divide your men at once, Kavanagh—my brave boy, we go with the rest to try our hand with the Admiral, and if the wrongs of many years, let alone being five hundred to four, cannot win the day, why then there’s no trusting to blood or tears. Come on.”

“ Huzza ! Vengeance for ever ! ” was the vociferated reply.

“ Are you ready all ? ”

“ All ready.”

“ Then down with those ladders.”

In an instant the cleats securing the ladders leading down the main hatchway were knocked away, and the ladders themselves laid on the combings below to give standing-room.

“ Here, my lads, eleven of you seize each man a thirty-two pound shot, and follow me.” Then taking up a cannon ball in both hands and raising it over his head, Græme stood on the ladders just

pulled down, while the hatches over-head, which the Admiral had barred or "battened down," prevented his egress on the main deck. The eleven having taken up a similar station, he asked if they were "ready."

"All ready."

"Now then, up with them,"—when the whole twelve bending their arms and knees, and then suddenly straightening the same, simultaneously discharged against the hatchway above the heavy impetus of the cannon-balls, propelled by the whole strength of these living battering-rams—still it stood. "Again boys, again." Once more they struck it, and splinters of the oak fell among them; but it yielded not. "Third time's lucky, now again,"—but no, it remained firm. "Fling down your shot, they've put some catamaran or other over it—yes"—thrusting his cutlass through the black tarpaulin which covered the grating, "they've capsized one of the main-deck guns on the top of it."

"We're done blue!" said some one.

"Done blue, no," replied another, "let's break through the deck."

"Break the deck, eh! Griffin?" said a third,

“ You talk as if you were Herculiss, that cap-sized seventy thousand fiddlers with the jaw bone of an elephant.”

“ Hush, lads,” interposed Græme, “ we’re not baffled so easily, we’ll be masters of the main-deck within the half-hour yet, so cheer up. Aft here some fifty of ye; lay by your arms for a space, every man where he can get at them quickly. Carpenters, where are your adzes?”

“ Here, sir.”

“ Quick then, rip up the deck from just before the after-hatchway to here, which includes one beam and two carlines. Get your saws and cut them all off close to the ship’s side—mizen-top-men down in the cable-tier there—get two hawsers—bear-a-hand and coil them down under the after-hatchway, so that not a soul can go up or come down. Fore-top-men down below—break open the after-hold—reeve the falls, and hoist up half a hundred casks of beef and pork. Main-top-men—get the guns from aft, which you hauled out from the gun-room, place them under the main-hatchway, and see you leave no passage there for the Admiral to surprise us. After-guard—get the same thing done at the fore-hatch, and coil down

a hawser on the guns as well; let it be chock-a-block, not a soul of them shall ever come down here alive. That's it; cheer up, my hearties, we'll soon have it all our own way: and bear-a-hand before the gale comes on to blow so hard that we can't keep our legs; the old ship rolls now as much as we can work with. Here, my lads, all spare hands that are left jump down into the cable tier, cut two of the bower cables, and pass an end up on each side, while some of you remain here and coil them down athwart-ship in two long coils, just forward of the after-hatch, close to where they're ripping up the deck."

These directions being given, Græme seized an adze and commenced scuttling the deck, which was done by cutting through the plank with the adze in a direct line from side to side, in two parallels; then sawing close to the bulwarks, the beam and two carlines which gave support to the mass underneath, the whole portion, about nine feet fore and aft, fell with a tremendous crash on the orlop deck below; where the cabin-bulkheads had been already removed to make way for it. As it gave way and left a dark impassable chasm, Græme looked with some apprehension in his

countenance, almost expecting to behold the weakened side at once give way, and the whelming tide rush in. The old ship, however, merely trembled, as if endowed with instinct to grieve over this mutilation of her hull for such unhallowed purposes, and the work of devastation went on once more. Despite the rolling of the ship, which now began to be very heavy, even on the lower deck, where—as nearer to the centre of motion—it was less felt than in any other part, the men, urged on by the excitement of the moment, applied themselves with a determination that conquered every obstacle. In a very little time, part of the hemp cables had been coiled across the deck on either side in a line with the after-hold, from whence casks of beef and pork had been taken and piled on the cables, so as to form the embrasures for two of the lower deck guns, which, having been taken from their port-holes, lashed firmly down, and pointed aft, made a couple of small batteries that commanded the deck to the very gun-room ports, so that none of the party aloft could descend by the cabin windows; while on the casks were nailed the pieces

of plank stripped from the deck, thus making a complete intrenchment, which it would have been impossible to force, when we remember that the deck had been cut away for the space of nine feet from before these guns on either side.

Thus secured abaft, the fore-hatchway was effectually blocked up by the hawsers coiled down under it, the main-hatch Græme had, for reasons of his own, left in a state that admitted of its being easily cleared. "Thompson—go down below, and see that all the young gentlemen who were in their berths during punishment, are marched into the cockpit, and tell the surgeon and his assistants to get out their traps ready for action. Macpherson—go forward, slip all the breechings of the bow-guns, and get them abaft the fore-hatchway, lash three of them athwart the deck, and point their muzzles forward. Kavanagh—will you look to the same on the other side of the deck?"

"Ay, ay, Sir," replied the second and third in command, and off they went to execute these orders, which the reader will perceive were to construct other batteries across the deck commanding

the bow, similar to those astern, and leaving a fortified space between the two for the mutineers, to which they could retreat secure from surprise.

“ Here we are all idle, Mr. Græme, what next ?” enquired some of his band.

“ Idle, my lads, no need for idling now—we’ve no time to spare, quick—here, help them aft with the bow-guns, while some of you slip the breechings of these from her old sides, and point them aft—Hook your tackles and to it steadily. Down one of you to the gunner’s store-room, and tell them to make up some fifty cartridges for the lower-deck guns ; but mind, boy, with only one-fifth of the usual charge.—Steady there, boys, smartly and steady, how the old ship rolls !”

Leaving the mutineers then busily engaged in their appalling plans, let us ascend to the quarter-deck, and by seeing the preparations going on there, contrast the genius of the carpenter and the Admiral.

“ I’ve just been on the main-deck, sir, and I can’t conceive, from the uproar, what the men are about,” said the captain to his superior.

“ Getting drunk, perhaps,” replied the Admiral.

“ No, sir,” returned the captain, “ it sounded to me as if they were breaking up the decks.”

“ Ha ! What can that be for—madness—I hope they won’t be setting fire to the ship !”

“ Or blowing us up, sir ?” A shade of gloom came across the Admiral’s countenance.

“ Grummet, we must get these unfortunate women below,” pointing to the officers’ wives, who, alarmed at the noise and firing, were now crowding on deck, hanging about their husbands’ necks, some crying—fainting—in hysterics, and showing all the other marks of extreme terror to which the sensitiveness of the fair sex subject them ; as if to prove how wholly dependent on the love and protection of man nature had ever intended them to be.

“ But Captain Grummet, where is Mrs. Somers, I don’t see her ?”

“ No, sir, she preferred remaining below with her child.”

“ Ah ! she has more sense and beauty too than any of them.—Tell the soldier-officers they must get their friends out of the way—Heaven knows what may be coming on ; these fellows below seem determined not to remain quiet, and if once they break from the lower-deck, we shall have to show a stout fight for it. Where’s the first lieutenant, sir ? Reeve the necessary tackle

and hoist four of the quarter-deck guns on the poop,—they shall have a bloody reception !”

“ Ay, ay, sir—had we not better make a barricade of hammocks along the quarter-deck ?”

“ No, sir, that will interfere with carrying on the duty of the ship. We are not quite so much afraid of a few rebels under hatches, as to ensconce ourselves behind a heap of pursers’ blankets. Send fifty men down on the main-deck well armed to see that none of those scoundrels below get out from their confinement—Ladies, I must entreat”—advancing to the terrified females, who, grouped together, were imploring permission to remain on deck.—“ I must insist on your going below instantly, you only add to our embarrassment, and I assure you there’s not the slightest danger.”

“ Oh, Admiral, save us ! save us !” screamed the ladies, wild with affright, falling prostrate over one another on the deck beneath them, which shook as with some vast concussion, and then flung up a thousand splinters from its planks high in the air ; which, caught by the wind, were rapidly borne to leeward on the foaming sea, while a roar—a deafening roar and shout—burst from beneath, that might well warrant the conclusion of those who

cried, "They're blowing us up!"—"Oh! we're going down—we're sinking!!"

Peal succeeded peal—huge fragments of the deck, torn up by some resistless force from beneath, flew around, striking many and threatening destruction to more. On the broken and splintered planks, were strewed officers and men, some streaming with gore and crying out with agony for assistance, others merely felled unhurt. The Admiral, guessing what was the cause of all this dreadful commotion, hurriedly seized two ladies by the arms, and beckoning to the others to follow him, led the way to his cabin on the main-deck which had been given to them, assuring the fair refugees that it was the only place of safety.

CHAPTER IX.

“ The sun went down—nor ceas’d the carnage there,
Tumultuous murder shook the midnight air—

* * * * *

The storm prevails—the ramparts yield away—
Burst the wild cries of horror and dismay !—
Hark ! as the smouldering piles in thunder fall,
A thousand shrieks for hopeless mercy call !—

* * * red meteors flash along the sky,

And conscious Nature shudders at the cry !—

CAMPBELL.

FOR an explanation of the foregoing scene, we must return to the lower-deck, where the reader will recollect that Græme was employed in casting loose the guns from the ship’s broadside. This done, the men, by means of tackles, hauled them to the middle of the deck, and securing them with lashings to the ring-bolts—their muzzles pointed towards the stern—took out all the coils or supports from the breech of each cannon, thereby elevating the mouths to such a degree that the shot would penetrate the intervening decks and reach the poop. Four guns on each side having been thus prepared, they were loaded

with one-fifth of the usual quantity of powder and two shot, each of thirty-two pounds. By discharging these, Græme intended to make a sufficient breach in the deck above to admit his men, in addition to the annoyance which the balls would occasion to the Admiral and his party, by forcing their way through the quarter-deck.

"We're all ready to fire, Sir," said the men stationed at these dreadful engines.

"Stand back, boys, all of you out of the way," said Græme, moving on one side, where folding his arms he stood prepared to meet his fate, if the concussion about to ensue should, through its want of vent, blow out the ship's side. He looked around; all were expecting the word—"Only one gun, my men, at a time.—Now then, the inside one.—Fire!"

A vivid flash was seen, and a stunning sound followed, while the compressed air felt like a stopper thrust suddenly into their ears, the ship shook violently as if about to fall to pieces, and the yawning deck above proclaimed it had not been in vain. As soon as the dense smoke cleared off through the chasm above, they beheld the gun

dismantled, owing to the lashing having given way beneath the recoil, while the hapless gunner was jammed beneath the mass—a corpse.

“Poor fellow!” said Græme, involuntarily shuddering at the mangled remains—then remembering how necessary was the mask of firmness to him—“here, my boys, right this gun, take poor Kemp from under it, and bear him gently down to the surgeon. Stand back out of the recoil of the other, if the lashing should give way again, and fire one by one.” Flash after flash succeeded, and with the roar of each cannon was heard the splintering of the deck above.

“Go it, lads, go it! We’ll soon make up our way to old Blue-beard.”

“Aye, my boy, we’ll smoke the old rat, he, Oakum, and old Holystone-Jack*: we’ll have a slap at them all together.”

“Here goes,—a shot for Jack, and another for Oakum.”

* Oakum, a nick-name for the captain, who was in the habit of picking up all the rope-yarns that fell in his way, and unravelling them into oakum. Holystone Jack was a name for the first lieutenant, from his being so particular in having the deck cleaned in that manner, which had just come into use.

“Well done, boy, and here’s a third for old Blue-beard.”

“More powder here, Master Monkey.”

Thus, while sending these messengers of slaughter among their old shipmates and messmates, did these reckless beings mingle words of mirth with acts of destruction.

“A few more rounds, lads, and our breach will be large enough,” said Græme, when a discharge from the opposite side seemed about to part the decks between which he stood, and give the ship up a ready-made wreck to the fury of the waves. A cry of horror was heard amid the crash, and looking towards the spot, he beheld a broken gun-carriage with parts of the gun itself strewed around, while five of their lifeless and mutilated bodies yet streaming with gore, added to the horrors of the spectacle. Above them appeared an immense breach caused by the bursting of the piece, which they, in their zeal, had thoughtlessly overloaded.

“Holloa, Mr. Græme! Here’s the gun burst,” said one of the seamen, “and a pretty skirmish they’ve made of it; but what lubbershole is that up aloft there?”

“ Don’t ye see, Will, half o’ the gun’s flown up there—a sort of iron skylark to go mounting aloft in that manner!”

“ Ah! the cheils wad gae their ain gate—puir feckless bodies that they are, to put in powther more than eneugh for a sax-mile action.”

“ Holloa, Mac; stopper there six miles!—long enough!”

“ Haud your tongue yoursel, lad, nane o’ your clishmaclavering, but lend a hand to the puir mangled bodies—it’s o’ nae use to greet, forbye we hae ower meikle wark on our hands already. Here, some o’ ye, tak these puir chields down below—it makes but a sad sight for sair e’en, I’m thinking—Charlie Græme, do ye no think we might noo mak the maist o’ a bad bargain, an’ storm the main deck through that——”

“ Aye, Macpherson—this is no time for talk—we’ve made a sufficient breach at last, though it is at a sad expense. Gently there, Williams, that poor fellow you’re carrying seems to have some life left,—hand him over to the doctors when ye get below. Now, my lads, leave off firing, and take to your arms again. Every man buckle on sword and cutlass, and get a ship’s musket. Ka-

vanagh and Macpherson, see to them, and muster every one in rank and file."

"Ay, aye, Mr. Græme, 'twould be as well to ship a ladder agen that breach aloft there; we shall get up all the easier."

"Man, ye're right; no that thae chieils aloft will be meikle in our gate. I heard them skirling awai like the wee pipes o' a' papisher's organ no that lang syne. I've a fancy they're maist o' them gane up to auld Blue-beard, the de'il be wi' his black lug the whiles. The auld ship too, she must be making water this time, she rolls like a Dutch dogger, and these rumbustions are no that canny to bear, let alane the loons that hae left the pumps to work themselfs. Come lads, it's time ye get out o' this."

"We're ready, Macpherson, we're ready."

"Charlie lad, the men are aye waiting for ye."

"They shall not do so long, Mac; a few minutes, while Kavanagh secures the ladder."

"That's your sort, Mr. Græme, there ye are, firm as a church; up ye go, my hearties!"

"Wait, Kavanagh, let us do nothing rashly.—My boys, one of you step forward to go up first, reconnoitre and see if the coast be clear. 'Vast

heaving there—not so many, there's scarcely room for five to pass, much less fifty. Here Turtel, you're a stout smart fellow, take your pistol in one hand and hold your cutlass in the other above your head, in case any of them should be aloft. If the coast is clear give a whistle; if not, retreat, and we must take the deck by storm."

"Ay, aye, Mr. Græme—make a lane there—here goes!"—Saying which, the intrepid sailor, armed as he had been directed, bounded up the ladder with the swiftness of a young antelope. Scarcely, however, had his head appeared above the deck, when other voices were heard, exclaiming, "Here they come—here's one of them—down with him—down with the rascal."

"Hurrah, Turtel, stand to it. Hurrah! there goes his pistol. Hark! sharp work for the cutlasses."

"Draw, quick boys, draw and follow me;—Vengeance and follow!"

"There goes Mr. Græme. Now hearties, push with a will!" sang out the mutineers below, crowding after their leaders, and literally propelling by main force up the hatchway all those who stood foremost, like some subterraneous

spring, which, from the pressure on its body of waters, finds a sudden outlet and rises into a grand *jet-d'eau*; thus the mutineers poured forth in an uninterrupted file, until the ladder below, giving way, cut off the supplies.

“Bravo, my men!” exclaimed the officer who headed the loyal party, and had been stationed on the main-deck to prevent any irruption,—“there goes their ladder, they’re cut off—now then, now’s the time! Hurrah, for old England! press them now.”

“‘Press!’—infernal tyrant, *that* have ye ever done, but ye shall never oppress more, take this in vengeance for a murdered wife!” cried Græme, animated by the sense of danger and the thoughts of oppression; then springing forward at the head of his men, while his powerful arm swung round the heavy cutlass, he aimed his blow. The officer—one long obnoxious to the crew—saw the stroke coming, and lifted his uniform sword to ward it off—the differently tempered blades met—a spark—a clash,—and the defender’s sword and head were severed at the same moment.

“So perish the potsherds o’ Belial!” vociferated Macpherson, while the seamen seeing their

officer fall, instantly fled, some to the quarter-deck, and many to throw themselves on the mercy of the conquerors, who giving them arms, gladly admitted them as brothers in the quarrel.

“ Now, Macpherson, now lads—look about you before we have them down on us from the quarter-deck. Here, toss this gun off from the main-hatchway grating. No wonder we couldn’t force it”—

“ Force it man, they’ve lashed it fast enough.”

“ Ay, Mac, but the sword that can loose a head from its shouthers, need’n’t make much of a yarn lashing,” replied Græme, severing the ropes, when the roll of the vessel caused the incumbrance to slide off into the lee-scuppers, bringing up against another cannon, with a jerk that made the ship shake to its centre.

“ Secure it there, and lash it, or we shall have it walking through the side with some of these lee-lurches.—Off with the main hatches! that’s it—here come our lads, now we need fear nothing—Carpenter’s crew, sound the pumps—Kavanagh, we must clap on a couple of gangs to this work immediately: I fear our firing has not stopped leakage much—How many inches, Grooves?” ad-

dressings his former mate, but one who now held the warrant (as the reader knows). He had been below during punishment at the pumps, was hurried in the crowd to the main-deck, and joined the mutineers as much from the impossibility of leaving them as from sympathy with the wrongs of his former superior. Having dropped the sounding rod and examined it, with a rueful countenance he replied,

“ Fifty-three, sir.”

“ Surely, Grooves, you mistake.”

“ Ah ! I wish I could think so, but you mind, sir, they’ve left off pumping, the cowardly rascals, for the last quarter of an hour.”

“ True, Grooves, that will account for it, and it’s well they did so, for these shot, you see, have come through the deck just in the water-way, so we should have had it all down on us below. Fix the hoses quickly, old boy, and get some hands to work here, while I hoist up two or three guns from the lower-deck. Old Blue-beard has spiked all these—I fear’d he would be too cunning to forget that. How the old ship rolls !”

“ Rolls, Mr. Græme, I wonder how she’s kept together so long after cutting away that beam and

those carlines—Ah, Mr. Græme! that was a bold plan.”

“It was necessary, Grooves, to secure us a sure retreat: we all must bow to necessity. I hope her old timbers will hang together yet; if it would please God to let the sea go down a little! this roll hardly allows us to work as I would wish; but it is all in his hand. It has pleased him to place me here, and I must do my duty without shrinking.”

“Ah, sir! but it’s an awful waste of blood!”

Græme started, his countenance proved him to be agitated. “True, Grooves, but if it were his pleasure not to be so, would he not turn the hearts of the crew?—I have not sought this, I have not worked them up to this, until nothing else was left to me. You know I have humbled myself before tyranny, oppression, even to the loss of all that were dear, ay, even to being flogged; but the name of the dear dead we are bound to maintain,” drawing himself proudly up. “‘Vengeance is mine,’ says He who orders all things, and is not this His vengeance?—Are we not His tools?”—Proud of his cause, which might have stung a meeker spirit

to madness, and led away by a belief whose errors, passion had not allowed him to examine—it is little wonder that one from whom tyranny had reft all that makes life dear, should have stood forth in the fearfully determined prominence which he now occupied. Confident through his enthusiasm in the sacred justness of his cause, he proceeded to give the necessary orders.

“Stand out here, some two hundred of you, my brave fellows, and hold your ground in case they should be inclined to pay us a visit from aloft.—A dozen of you with muskets come here, and protect those under the waist-gratings, and pick those villains off from above. Armourer!—Is the armourer present?”

“Here am I, sir.”

“See if you can’t unspike some of these guns while we get up one or two from the lower deck. Cut away three or four gun-tackles, boys, from these twenty-four pounders—but see that you leave them secured, or we shall have them rattling on us—then reeve a fall through the sheaves over head, while some of you jump below and secure the gun: when once we get him in the hatchway, unpin the trunnions—we’ll have the car-

riage up afterwards, and mind the roll of the ship—no broken shins.—Kavanagh, my boy!”

“Holloa, Bo?”

“Jump down below, will you? and stand to the guns beneath on this side where they’re not pumping. I hear them making a move on deck. I think they’re coming down again, so, till we get some pieces up here, you must resume your fire from below, but don’t begin till I say ‘when.’”

“Ay, aye, Mr. Græme, I’m your man.”

“Macpherson!” continued the carpenter, “you must see to getting up the long metal, don’t be interrupted, they’ll have much to do to force us out of this.—How many do we muster for fighting?” looking round. “Come, three hundred of us holding this weather-waist, may laugh at old Blue beard’s dislodging us; now, cheer my hearties, here they come!”

As he spoke, the noise overhead intimated that the Admiral’s party were opening the after-hatch which they had battened down after the last success of the mutineers, while a little addition of light stole through to illumine the twilight darkness below.

“Down on them, my men! down on them! in

the name of your king and country!" was the Admiral's cry, as the first lieutenant jumped down the ladder waving with his sword for the men to follow him.

He no sooner appeared below to the eyes of the mutineers than three wild huzzas burst from them, accompanied by the clash of arms and the cries of "Down with the holystone * *, down with the old blue-bearded thief!"

On hearing this shout, the men paused, while the first lieutenant, finding himself deserted, stood with one leg on the ladder, calling to the men to follow him. Seeing that the mutineers made no advance from the line in which Græme had drawn them up, he took courage, crying out, "Now, my men, this way—now's the time—the rascals are afraid of us——"

"You lie, you lubber," exclaimed a seaman, discharging a musket-ball at the lieutenant which shattered his right hand, causing it to drop powerless, with the sword which it was in the act of brandishing."

"Not another shot," cried Græme, restraining the impatience of his men.—"Wait, my lads, wait, we are sure of them."

“Go down with you—On——Down——the first man that turns back, I blow his brains out!” roared the Admiral from above, compelling his party to the attack, who, now pushing forward in a body, bore before them the disarmed lieutenant to perish inevitably on the swords of their antagonists like an uprooted pine swept onward by the stream of some mighty river, to meet destruction in the cataract roaring at hand.

Once in motion, and they rushed upon the extended cutlasses, pikes, and bayonets of the mutineers, with the excitement of such a moment heightened into rage by the loss and wounds they had suffered from the subkatabomental fire of the insurgent party.

Immovably did Græme’s men await the onslaught, until they beheld their opponents securely pass over the splintered shot-holes of the deck on which the latter unsuspectingly trode—never dreaming in their fury that any others were below.

“Give way to them, lads, give way, draw them fairly over!” said Græme retreating; then, seeing the favourable moment—“Below there, Grape and cannister, FIRE—FIRE!!”

It were hard to say, as this order was carried into execution, which rose in tones of awe above the other—the yell of pain and surprise as the sulphureous flames burst forth from beneath, accompanied with the iron shower scattering death and destruction, or the tremendous reverberating roar of the artillery beneath, with which the huge frame trembled like a mountain in the convulsive throes that bring forth her fiery offspring.

“They’re blowing us up!” cried the seamen.

“Fools!” returned their officers, “’tis only their guns, stand to it—have at them, hew the mutinous rascals to pieces—support them on the left there—Admiral, fresh supplies—send us quickly a few more hands—turn about, my men! now for it—NOW!”——

“What’s the use of fighting great guns?” reiterated the men, jumping on the bristling deck, as if it had been a glowing gridiron.

“Keep to your cutlasses, my lads; don’t stir, cut down all within reach, but no breaking line!” were the orders of Græme. “There they go, they retreat full pelt, give it to them; steady with your muskets, no moving—fire!”

All efforts were tried in vain to make the men

stand a discharge that none could have stood—at once unavoidable and not to be returned—and then the panic became complete—those who had crossed the fatal line, either falling beneath the cutlasses of their opponents, or meeting death in their endeavours to repass it, while those who could contrive to scramble back with only a slight wound were esteemed lucky, the hatch being so hastily closed as to cut off some half a dozen stragglers. These, expecting no less than death from the mutineers, were clamorously imploring for an escape. But tortuous expediency was the policy of the tyrannical old officer aloft, and on hearing their cries, he merely ordered the grating to be secured by another bar, lest the same path which afforded retreat to his friends, should also admit his enemies.

“Cease firing, lads, cease firing below there!—Come, shipmates, throw down the arms which you have been made to bear for tyrants, and take quarter at the hands of men as brave and more free,” said Græme, stepping forward to the unfortunate seamen, who gladly availed themselves of his generous offer.

“Come, cheer up, shipmates, now that this

spree's over, it's well enough for us; we've lost but a few hands—ha! whom have we here?”

“Old Holystone Jack, your honour; how he's skivered! He's a made more mess on the decks in going off the hooks, than ever he'll be able to clane up again with his thundering bibles!*

“Ah, every bullet has its billet—take them away to leeward, boys, open a port and let them over gently—it's hard to say whose to make up his bed there next—they've got the parson aloft, I suppose, or he might give a bit prayer over their bodies; but it's all one to Him who ordered it—as the tree falls, so it must lie—a shipmate might have wished them to die in a better cause.”

“Holloa, Mr. Græme! who comes here?” said one of the seamen, looking aft towards the ward-room cabin.

The carpenter, on being addressed, turned his head and beheld a female, bearing an infant in her arms, and supported in her efforts to walk the deck by the wardroom-steward. The first glance informed him that it was Mrs. Somers, to whom we must give a new chapter.

* The stones with which the decks are cleaned have been called bibles by the seamen—probably from the operation being performed on their knees.

CHAPTER X.

“ Be comforted, good madam : the great rage,
You see, is cured in him. Yet is there danger.
Desire him to go in.—Trouble him no more
Till further settlement. The arbitrement
Is like indeed to be a bloody one.”

KING LEAR.

GREME having hastily arranged his dress in the best manner which the time permitted, and effaced such marks of the fray as might be revolting to a female eye, advanced to meet and thank her who had so kindly interested herself in his misfortunes, and accordingly addressed her in terms of unfeigned gratitude, but she interrupted him, saying,

“ Do not thank me—it is unnecessary. I have scarcely merited so much at your hands. I felt for you—I still feel for your deep wrongs. I was present when the captain read the horrid letter which laid the foundation of all this bloodshed. I

merely acted by you as I would wish another to act by me—if you have the spirit to return this feeling, O! by how much more have you not the power?”

“I, madam!” exclaimed Græme, not exactly comprehending her meaning—“Can I be of use to you—say how? and I will be happy to ——”

“Can you! Do you ask that question? Is not every thing dependent upon you? Are you not leading on these men to take possession of the ship? Are you—forgive me if it sound harsh to your ears—are you not the chief of the mu——”

“‘*Mutineers*’ you would say, madam, and need not be afraid to speak it out—the trampled reptile has turned at last; but we have wrongs, and bitter ones, to redress, and tyrants to humble, but for all that, we do not carry on a war with your defenceless sex. I cannot see very clearly how a rough fellow of a sailor like myself, can be of any use to you; but if it should fall out, you may reckon on so humble a servant to the last.”

“Generous seaman! this is indeed a full return; but I gave you credit for no less—you can feel for

the terrors which such horrid scenes as these" (looking round) "call up in a female breast—you who have so lately lost one—"

"O! name her not, I beseech you."

"Alas, then, I will not—yet let me implore you by the pangs which you feel for her loss, to consider the situation of many now on board, who are anxiously looking forward, at the end of this voyage, to meet those to whom they are bound as dearly as you were to her you have lost. Let me implore you to consider this. Let me entreat of you to think that the awful gale now raging around us, and hourly increasing, threatens destruction to our leaky ship, without our encountering the additional horrors of a massacre. To think of human beings firing their cannons through a vessel pronounced unsafe, even at sailing, and which the fury of the waves almost overwhelms, but which your terrific internal dissensions now threaten with instant destruction."

"Lady," replied Græme, striving to keep down the sad air of conviction which these just remarks had excited, "I cannot but admit that your apprehensions are not unreasonable; but even then, what would you have me to do?"

"Return to your duty—use your influence to

make the other sailors follow you, and submit to the Admiral. Surely you have mistaken his character—Oh! you know not his gentleness, his gallantry, which he masks over, perchance, on duty—he will be kind and indulgent to your errors; for surely, your temptations have been great. Do this, and I myself will kneel to him and obtain his forgiveness of the past.”

“Alas! Ma’am, your good and simple disposition would raise a smile of incredulity, did I not know that a heart so warm and natural has been betrayed into believing appearances. The Admiral *good*? the Admiral *gentle*? Had you said, that he was a brave—determined—clever sailor, I could have admired your discrimination; for he is all these. But who could be otherwise than good and gentle to one who is all goodness and gentleness in herself?—No: he is a tyrant, a bloody-minded tyrant—the more to be dreaded from those good qualities in his character which I have named—he is one who has too often deceived us, ever to be trusted again;—yet if there remains any other point in which it is possible for me to show my pity for your sad condition, you have but to speak.”

““Speak!” what can I ask since you have refused

to take the only course that can save our lives. This vessel is sinking—I am sure she is sinking, and if you continue to fight in this dreadful manner we shall never live till the morning. Do, oh do!” she continued, seeing that Græme hesitated, “reconsider the awful murders in which you are engaged—can you reconcile it to your consciences to seek the presence of your God, your hands yet red with the blood of fellow-beings violently shed—the blood not of enemies, but countrymen, not merely countrymen but those with whom you have been living as friends and intimates? You relent, I see, you relent—you must shudder at thinking of so dreadful a fate being at hand.—What has urged you to this desperate course? your wrongs? Are they not the wrongs of an individual? then how many similar injuries are you not inflicting on those around you by this very vindication of your own? Am I not myself an example?—You are now in arms against your superiors because they have torn from life a dearly beloved wife—because they have caused your children to be orphans. Do you not inflict the same dreadful fate on me? I speak not for myself otherwise than as an example—I am hastening to

meet the only being dear to me on earth, after a long and painful separation. I am the responsible guardian of his only child,—then by this child as well as by the dear remembrance of your own, I pray you to reflect, to ask your bosom what will be the unspeakable agony of him who loses that child, and her who gave it birth, through the mutiny of this night—the many months, perhaps years, of suspense before their dark fate is unrolled, the waste which life will then prove—this you can tell—this you can imagine for you have felt it. O ! by every hope that is left to you on earth——”

“ I have none.”

“ Alas ! then, by every hope you yet entertain of heaven—do not inflict on others totally innocent, the same pangs as those you now feel, in order to satiate yourself with a vengeance that far from bringing consolation can only render you subject to a deep account.”

“ Poor babe !” muttered the rough sailor, taking in his arms the little infant that put forth its rosy hands towards him, while it smiled unconscious of the present, and unheeding the fated future. “ Poor babe ! once I had such a wife and child until tyranny and oppression ——” but his voice

quivered—he was dumb—scalding tears rolled over those cheeks now blackened with the smoke of cannon, and seemed to leave a seared track behind them, as memory recalled the past—then handing back the child to its lovely parent—“No!—so may God disown me if I do not lend you all the assistance I can; but alas! what will that be, madam? As to the Admiral’s mercy, should we return to our duty—it is madness after what has passed to think of it. Willingly would I give to your necessities the worthless remains of a life that can be no longer useful or desirable to its owner; but the end of it would be, the command going to some one else less disposed, yes, and less able to effect anything for you or one who might even allow the license of the men.”

“Oh! protect your life—if only for your children!”

The carpenter shook his head in silence, but it was a silence that said, “I shall never see them more.”

“No, lady, I will preserve my life for the sake of those on board, who have few others to assist them; but the first word that I were to

utter to the crew—infuriated and superior in numbers as they now are—relative to a surrender to the Admiral, would be the signal for my confinement at least, if not of my death:—no ; if there be any surrender, it must be that on the side of the Admiral and his party, since he has lost many lives, and we must soon win by force all that we want—the possession of the ship. This if taken from him, would perhaps cost his life; but if granted to us—yes!” continued Græme, after a slight pause, as if to recollect himself, “to prove to you, madam, that my words are not empty talking, I myself will go to him, and by showing how impossible it is for his party to retain the ship, persuade him to give her up, on condition of being set free on the first shore,—here is my honour to that effect; and now let me recommend you to retire to the orlop deck with that poor infant, where you will be safe from every thing. I will see all the comforts within our reach administered to you.”

“But may I indeed depend upon your exertions? Will you truly use all your efforts to put an end to this frightful slaughter?”

“ By all that is dear to me here, or sacred hereafter, I swear to you to exert myself to the utmost to preserve life, and get the ship safe to port.”

“ I will believe you, I cannot doubt your truth, and gladly avail myself of your offer to go below, provided my servant is allowed to accompany me and we are free to return to the cabins at pleasure.”

“ In any thing you shall act as you see fit, madam: this is but a hideous sight around here. The deck is too slippery for you to walk, in addition to the rolling, so I must help you over it. Steward, take that young woman carefully,” pointing to the servant, “ and follow me;” saying which, Græme gently lifted Mrs. Somers in his arms, and bore her down into one of the cabins on the lower deck; then returning to his shipmates, and summoning Macpherson, Kavanagh, and others around him, he communicated to them his plan of summoning the Admiral to surrender.

“ Weel ! suppose I’ll no disapprove o’ this plan a’ thegither, still I’m clear we’re no for letting Mr. Græme, the head o’ us, gang up to that dour auld rascal, wha we a’ ken to hae as fause a heart

as e'er loupit in ae man's bosom," said Macpherson, with all the wary caution of his countrymen.

"Yes, Mr. Græme, Mac's right," returned Kavanagh, seconding the motion. "Some other hand should go with that message."

"I'll go my lads."

"And so will I," shouted each man.

"Kavanagh, what say you?"

"I say yes, bo', any one should go but you."

"Let's draw lots some twenty of us."

"Aye, that's the fairest after all, and Mr. Græme 'll manage it."

Accordingly Græme tore up several pieces of paper, on one of which was written the monosyllable "go;" and having shaken them together in his cap, handed it round for the crew to help themselves. After a short scramble, Grooves holding up the piece of paper declared that the mission had fallen on him.

"A good lot!" remarked several of the crew. "Mr. Grooves is one of the Admiral's cronies; he'll hearken to him when he would'nt to any one else."

“ Now then, Grooves, do you quite understand your message?” enquired Græme, taking him on one side.

“ Ay, aye, Mr. Græme, I think I have it pretty pattish; but if so be you’d just write it down on a slip o’ paper with the steward’s inkhorn—”

“ Right boy, then there’ll be no mistaking it.—Run one of you and get the pen and ink from the ward-room steward;—Kavanagh do you go on with hoisting up the lower deck guns.”

“ Never fear that, Græme, I’ve had up four.”

“ That’s good; two more will do. Lash two guns down on each side, and send the others forward.”

“ Here’s the ink, Mr. Græme, but the steward says as how he’s got no paper.”

“ Has any man a hat here?”

“ Who says ‘hat?’ here’s one.”

“ Then tear out the lining, boy, and hand it here.—Thank ye. Now then,” placing the scrap of paper thus obtained on the bit-head, while he wrote as follows: “The ship’s company of H. M. S. ———, now in arms for the recovery of their freedom, do hereby send the bearer, John Grooves, with a flag of truce to convey the following proposal to Admiral ———, and the detachment of the crew by him commanded. We, the ship’s

company, amounting to six hundred men, considering that our cause is a just cause before man and Heaven, that the superiority of numbers and position belong to our side; that we have command of all the spirits, water, and provisions of this ship, as well as the magazines of powder and shot, and the command of the rudder at our will, do hold it certain that any further fighting must place in our hands the command of the upper deck, and the lives of those who may be rash enough to dispute it; seeing moreover that in the attempts made by Admiral ———, to regain possession of the lower decks, a great many lives have been lost, we hold it to be our duty before the happening of any further bloodshed, to offer to all the officers and men now keeping the upper deck, fair and free quarter upon the condition of their absolute surrender of the ship into our hands when such officers and men shall be safely landed on the nearest shore; and so to the truth and fulfilment of these conditions do we here set our hands and swear." To this document fifty of the crew signed their names in a circle, called a round robin, as deputies for the rest.

Grooves having received his final instructions, he was led into the ward-room by the steward,

who, after some knocking under the hatch that communicated with the poop, made the officers above comprehend that one of the seamen wished to wait on the Admiral with the terms of a surrender. With that natural impulse which men ever have to interpret all things in their own favour, the party on deck concluded it was a surrender from the mutineers to them. Eagerly then—though with caution—did they allow the envoy to ascend and approach the Admiral.

No sooner had the crew below ascertained the fact of his reception, than they became very anxious to know or witness, if possible, the result of the interview. The latter was, for the whole of their body, impossible; the former they accomplished by making a seaman stand upon one of the guns just hoisted up from the lower-deck, and thrust his head up between the booms, where he could behold all that took place on the quarter-deck, without much exposure of himself.

“D’ye see him, Jack?” anxiously demanded his shipmates below.

“Ay, aye! Bo’! there he stands afore ould Bluebeard.”

“Is he saying any thing?”

“No—mum’s the word.”

“What’s auld Blue-beard doing?” enquired Macpherson.

“Oh! he’s spinning Grooves a tough *dialogue*—Now he shakes a fist at him—Now Grooves gives him the paper”——

“What does he say now?”

“Vast heaving—stop a bit—there—now—there’s ould Blue-beard in a reg’lar line—there he goes, stamping, cursing.—Now he hands Grooves over to the serjeant o’ marines.—Hark!—he calls the skipper and oshiffers to the capstan!”

“What’s the yarn?”

“I can’t hear—only there’s Blue-beard giving them a quarter-deck sarment, as usual.—He’s asking them something—there they all nod their head, and go up on the poop.—Bravo! Hurrah my jollies!”

“What’s the kick now, since you laugh at it so much, Jack?”

“Why, the second leaftenant, in going up the poop ladder, missed his footing with the roll of the old ship, and capsized on the deck below.—Now they’re all up on the poop.—Why, shiver my timbers, if there isn’t old Grooves going up too!”

“Why what are they going to do with him?”

“I can’t see yet, Bo—’vast a minute.—There’s the old boatswain too, standing over to windward, with his pipe.—It’s a getting too dark; I can hardly see.—Hilloa!—Hallabaloo!—Here.—Jump up, shipmates; Mr. Græme, bear a hand here!—Holy man! if they a’n’t a going to dance old Grooves on the gantline, like a scrubbed hammock to dry!”

“Blue murder! No!—where?” exclaimed the many voices, each one trying to spring on the gun, and satisfy himself as to the truth of such an atrocious deed.—“Yes, there he goes, poor old chap, swinging aloft, like a pair o’ duck breeks on a windy morning! Oh you * * * *! We’ll be revenged for all this, we will!”

The curses and execrations that burst forth at this juncture from the seamen were scarcely uttered, when the boatswain’s pipe, borne on the blast to leeward, and accompanied with the tread of many feet, fell heavily upon the ear; and to the vengeful but sorrowing eyes of his shipmates was displayed the body of Grooves hanging at the cross-jack yard-arm. There it loomed, barely visible through the deepening gloom of approaching night, while the winds, whose sport it now

was, seemed at once to sing the requiem of the ill-fated mariner, and howl the prophetic note of vengeance for such a deed of treachery.

The Admiral had indeed been mad enough to execute him on the spot as a rebel,—thus disregarding the flag of truce; partly as a sacrifice to his own rage, and partly under the mistaken idea that it would prove an example.

“The blood-thirsty sleuth-hound!” exclaimed Macpherson to the enraged crew—“Saw ye ever the like o’ that? Shipmates, ye are not men if ye suffer sic an auld limb o’ the de’il to live a moment longer than when we set our claws on him.”

“We won’t, Mac, we won’t; never fear. By the ——, it’s all over with him! If the ship goes down the moment after, we’ll disappoint the old * * * * *. He shan’t go in her. Revenge, boys! *Revenge* for old Grooves’s murder. Ye see, boys, what ye have to expect from that hellicat aloft; and may the lad who won’t strike a blow in return, swing aloft at the spit yet!”

“REVENGE!”—burst forth simultaneously from five hundred voices, swelling and joining each other, until, in spite of the roaring gale, they reached the guilty chief, whose ears tingled at the

sound. Even Græme himself, who, as the reader is aware, had hitherto preserved a wonderful share of that coolness which distinguishes our northern countrymen—even he appeared to pluck from his bosom the last glimmering of mercy for such a wretch, and while his brain maddened over the death which his proposal had brought on one who had ever sympathized with his distresses, his eye glared, his form dilated, and his powerful voice went forth to swell the cry.

Having sent a message to Mrs. Somers, communicating the fatal result of their summons, and reassured her that all might yet go well, he returned with redoubled energy to the command of his men. Among these there lingered not one wavering feeling of irresolution to soften down the fierceness of their wrath.

“Let’s force this after-hatchway, Mr. Græme, let’s blow it clean out,” said one of the leaders.

“Stay! Kavanagh,” replied his chief, “Ten to one but they have capsized a gun upon it, as they did with the main-hatch; besides, I’m thinking we shall only lose a number of hands by carrying this point, where they’re all on the look out for us. But first light the fighting-lanterns, it begins to

grow dark, and poke your head up by the booms, one of you there, to see what they may be about. Sampson, you have sharp eyes."

"Aye, aye, sir—it's getting as dark as a negar's phiz. Heart-alive, Mr. Græme, if the rascals haven't taken every man's hammock out of the netting, and made a barrycade—or whatsomedever you call it, like our's below—slap across the quarter-deck abaft the hatchway, and they've got the forecastle guns aft in port-holes; they must have looked sharp, for it's most of it done since they hanged poor old Grooves."

"And where is Grooves now?"

"Oh, there he hangs, sir, swinging away up to windward like a target for the jollies to pop at."

"Take that for a target yourself, you mutinous scoundrel!" suddenly cried an officer who had seen the seaman peeping, and now discharged his pistol at him with a deliberate aim. The bullet crashed through his head, he fell upon the deck and expired without a groan.

"That's right, more of it, you murdering villains!" roared the surprised and infuriate seamen from below. "Now's your time, we'll soon how-

ever be equal with you!—blood for blood, you tomahawks!” and shouting back similar cries of defiance, they discharged their muskets up through the grating in the direction of the aggressor; but cruelty had as usual been mixed with cunning, and he was gone.

“Come, my boys,” said Græme, “take that poor fellow out of the way—They shan’t baulk you again; before long we’ll tread that deck aloft as masters, and bitterly pay back these murders. Meanwhile to it with a will, and think of *revenge!*”

“Huzza! *revenge*—death to the Admiral!” responded the men.

“Macpherson, where are you?”

“Here am I, man, I bide your orders”—

“Which are, to keep this main-hatchway with a hundred men, while six or seven of you go aft, take some shot in your hands, and make a feint to be breaking open the companion; make as much noise as you can—I am going to take three hundred brave hearts forward with me in the bows of her to carry the fore-hatch, and if possible gain the upper-deck. Stick to it, and success to both of us!”

“ Amen ! Mr. Græme. A gude cause is a tower o’ strength.”

“ Step forward there as silently as possible, three hundred of you, and keep from under the gratings, that you may’nt be picked off again by those hell-hounds above.—So, that’s enough of you, cover your lights and forward—twenty of you get this gun forward. Silent, lads, no noise and all work, think of your *revenge*—George,” continued Græme, tapping a young boy on the shoulder who had formerly been his servant.

“ Sir ?”

“ Will you run down into the cock-pit and tell Mr. * * *, with my compliments, that I should be glad to speak to him here immediately,” then turning to the men,—“ So, my hearties, forward with him, gently there, no noise—mind the roll, stand to him bravely, that’s he, now again.”

Thus encouraging and directing, did Græme fulfil to an exactitude the arduous duties which had devolved on him, until the men had acquired a greater confidence in the abilities so evident, than they would perhaps have reposed in any other officer in the ship.

“ Mr. Græme, I believe you sent for me ? ” said the prisoner of the poop, presenting himself to the mutineer.

“ Yes Mr. * * *, I did take that liberty, and one which I doubt not you will pardon when you hear the cause. You still decline to take any share in the events of to-night ? ”

“ Yes, Mr. Græme, I do—yet far be it from me, by my conduct, to attach any blame to yours. It is true my provocations have been great, but yours have far exceeded mine. Moreover, this fatal fray embroiled you in it at its commencement—not so with me,—and therefore, however justifiable it is for you who were driven to adopt such a course in a moment of excitement and self-defence, I could not extend the same justification to one who might coolly draw the sword against his superior officers and messmates, because the opportunity was afforded to do so, however he might loathe the tyrants and condemn their crimes. I may be wrong, but so it appears to me.”

“ You may be right Mr. * * *. I have no intention of questioning your motives, you are free to act as you please. I merely sent for you to request that as you had no more important duty to

take up your attention, you would see to Mrs. Somers, with whose situation aboard I suppose you are acquainted. 'Tis a hard thing so young a creature to be in the midst of such a slaughter-house—though, if beauty and a gentle heart might stave off sorrow, she is another that never ought to have known it. To see her here with the little innocent in her arms”—then muttering to himself as he drew his wrist over his face, “how a husband could go and leave such a—Well, well, Mr. * * *, this is all I sent to ask of you. Make my respects and thanks to her, and if I shouldn't see you again, why a long good bye—may you prosper wherever you go, and the service grow better to be worthy of you.” Saying which, Græme pressed the midshipman's hand, and hurried forward to direct his men; the young officer replying to his forebodings, that he “hoped better things, and that in the meantime Græme might trust to his care.” The prisoner then hastily turned down to the cabin specified, happy, as a resource from suspense and inactivity, to accept an office so congenial to his disposition. Ever possessed, as he had been, of a native vein of that feeling which was once called chivalry, and now

gallantry—it was with avidity that he sought the society of the gentler part of the creation—a female at any moment was an attraction, but one in distress, a perfect load-stone. It would indeed I think be difficult to meet with a character at once daring and refined, in which such a tone of feeling is not greatly prevalent. Leaving him, therefore, to his enviable duties, proceed we to accompany the mutineers.

CHAPTER XI.

“ Rank falls on rank, and file on file succeeds,
And crowds rush on for every *one* that bleeds.”

HOLLINGTON.

“ HERE we are, Mr. Græme, chock-a-block !” said one of the seamen, pointing to the gun whose carriage they had pulled along the deck until its wheels were touching the heel of the bowsprit under the forecastle, while the cylinder of the gun itself was pointed from side to side, or athwart-ships, the muzzle being elevated towards the deck.

“ Good, my lads—come round here—no noise. Are you all armed ?”

“ All ready.”

“ Then gather in a circle round this gun, with your cutlasses drawn. When you see me fire, and blow off that scuttle-hatch above, then do you

jump up three or four at a time. No row, mind, and be as little in one another's way as possible."

"Ay, aye, sir."

"Here, gunners," continued Græme, "your handspikes, parbuckle these fore-trucks up on the heel of the bowsprit—So—now out with the coils, and ease down her breech. Hush! gently there—not so loud,—that's right—now load her.—A small charge of powder, but plenty of langridge and canister. Stand by, my lads, to follow me—jump up steadily and sure, and then bear down on them along both gangways; don't be rash and advance too soon before we get men enough up to support one another. Make sure work of it with your cutlasses first, and keep your pistols for the last as a stand-by."

"Ready with the gun, Mr. Græme."

"Back out of the way all of you.—FIRE!"

No sooner had the flash and roar passed off, together with the smoke which they occasioned, than the fresh gale breathed down with revivifying influence on the heated combatants below, and the scuttle was beheld open from all impediment.

"On, my mates, and mount," cried Græme, springing up foremost, cutlass in hand. Then

waiting a second on deck, until a few more joined him, "Quick, my men, quick.—Spring up here, spring up for your lives, bear-a-hand—steady!—Now then, aft with us—here they come. Aft boys, aft!" and before the Admiral's party could recover from their surprise at seeing flames burst from the forecastle or divine what was the cause, they heard the heavy tramp of the mutineers along the gangways, and the clash of their weapons redly gleaming in the lantern-light that made its way from below.

"Stand to your arms, men—here they come!" shouted the Admiral in a voice of encouragement. "Seize your pikes, be firm, keep inside your hammocks and they can't force you."

"On boys, on for *revenge*!" was the fierce slogan of Græme, caught up and echoed by his followers until the different cries of onslaught were mingled and drowned in the rising tempest.

"Down with them lads, the —— soldiers!—Down with them, remember Grooves and Sampson! blood for blood, *Revenge*!"

"Hurrah, my men, for old England! Fight for your country. Give the mutinous rascals their dose of cold steel—give them the pike! Ha! there goes the foretopmast!" exclaimed the Admiral

as a violent shock was felt along the deck, accompanied by the dull sound of some falling body, and shrieks which were half lost in the roar of the increasing tempest.

“Cheer up, hearties, cheer up!—Lay on them, lay on, stick to them!”

“Hurrah for the king!” retorted the Admiral, “they’re only a handful, beat them back! Off with them, men! Now, then, a round of grape-shot from your guns, over at them over the hammocks, and follow it up, they’re a mere handful of men, they give way—they retreat—over after them and the day’s your own.”

“Hold on, my boys, a few minutes more; here come our shipmates. Remember Grooves—*revenge!*” roared back Græme, seeing that he was unsupported, and that his men gave way as much from loss as fatigue.—Second after second he continued fighting, in hopes that the rest of the mutineers would join him, but no—they came not, and he gradually lost ground before the Admiral’s party, until he was driven to the middle of the waist-netting, when a discharge from the quarter-deck-guns converted the retreat of the mutineers

into an absolute flight. Iron shot, however, not being able to discriminate betwixt friend and foe, many of both parties fell, and the loyalists content with beating off the attack, retired once more within the barricade of their own hammocks, and betook themselves to their guns.

At this moment, a fresh body of mutineers were seen leaping on deck from the fore-rigging, as if they had clambered out of the sea, when Græme discovered, that owing to the gale, part of the fore-top had given way, and the foretop-mast fallen through the forescuttle, blocking up the passage and terminating the lives of the unfortunate men who were in its way. In this emergency, with the ready invention of sailors, the mutineers had betaken themselves to the gun-ports under the forechains, and, by crawling out of these at the risk of their lives, had climbed in board, just at the moment when their assistance was useless and their friends effectually beaten off. Gathering them hastily together under the lee of the boats, to escape the Admiral's fire, Græme proceeded to remedy his late defeat.

“Jump down below on the main-deck, some

smart lad, through the scuttle, there's room enough for one to get, and tell our shipmates to bear a hand and get upon deck as soon as possible."

"Aye, aye! Sir, I'll go."

"'Vast heaving a minute—then scud down on the lower deck, get hold of the dry hawser coiled under the fore hatch-way, and chop off some fifty lengths, each half a fathom long, (three feet) pass them up to be lighted at one end in the galley fire, and then let them be handed on to me—off you go, look sharp, my lad, and keep your eye-teeth about you."

"Aye, aye, Sir!" once more responded the young sailor, darting down below to execute the orders just delivered to him.

"How many do we muster yet?" resumed Græme, turning about to his men, who, sword in hand, were crouching down under the shelter of the pinnace, to escape the grape shot now poured forth from the Admiral's guns on the quarter-deck.

"Nigh two hundred and fifty," replied one of the seamen.

"Come, that's right, by the time these tarred ends are ready, we shall have enough to board

old Blue-beard's quarters again. Fifty of you must take one of these in each of your left hands as a torch, and set fire to their barricade of hammocks; then throw a few amongst them to scare the jollies, and I'll be your caution, my lads, that they give way this time. We'll show them a little more light than they could gain from a purser's dip!"

While these matters are arranging forward, we shall have a few moments' breathing time to see how the officers have been occupied astern.

On the appearance of Grooves with a surrender, the Admiral, like the rest of his officers, cheated himself into the belief that it was a surrender of the mutineers to him; the reader may therefore conceive his rage when he found it was exactly the reverse. This feeling was also heightened by the bearer of such a document being Grooves; for as the Admiral had so lately promoted him to Græme's warrant, he thought he had the most imperative claims upon his fidelity. Too furious to make a single enquiry into the reason of this defection, he at once determined to take a signal vengeance on the defaulter, and, as he thought, strike a salutary terror into the rest of the crew.

The reader knows how mistaken was this theory. No sooner had he hoisted up the unfortunate envoy to the yard-arm, than he learnt from the shouting and commotion beneath, how far he had erred, and that he might instantly expect a yet more furious attack from below. Whatever were his faults as an officer, as a sailor he was fully equal to any emergency. Finding that it was to be determined by the strong hand, he lost no time in making the necessary defences. The guns from the fore-castle had been already brought to the quarter-deck, and the Admiral now made them bring all the hammocks from the nettings, and construct a complete barrier across from bulwark to bulwark, behind which he entrenched himself and men. Not content with this, he had, as a *dernier resort*, made such arrangements on the poop, as would enable them to take shelter there in the desperate emergency of being driven off the quarter-deck, which he would then be able to sweep with his guns—namely, two quarter-deck carronades hastily fitted and the swivels belonging to the boats. The result justified his apprehensions; but while he was preparing to see the rebels break forth from the companion where Macpherson and

his men were hammering like so many caulkers on a pay-day, Græme forced the fore-scuttle and took him by surprise.

This *ruse* would certainly have won for the latter the command of the deck, had not the accident of the fore-topmast, impeded the passage of the seamen to his assistance. The Admiral, delighted at having beaten them back, was already nursing afresh, golden hopes of victory, and marshalling his men, amounting still to two hundred and eighty, as prudence and circumstances dictated.

It was now about seven o'clock. The night was rapidly setting in, forestalled in its darkness by the dismal clouds that obscured the firmament; while the gale roared along over the foamy crests of the maddened sea with a wild prophetic sound, imperceptibly swelling in its bass note as if but the forerunner of the tornado so dreaded in those seas. On the foremast remained the wreck occasioned by the fall of its second spar; the canvass streaming in tatters from the topsail yard and flapping loudly in the gale,—the lighter gear and cordage flying away to leeward like snakes from the Gorgon's head. On the mainmast there luckily

yet remained the close-reefed maintopsail to aid the diminutive storm-staysail in keeping her crazy hull to the wind, while on the mizen all was furled, nor besides the bare spars was there a single object on which the fury of the wind could expend itself, except a long dark mass that swung steadily to and fro in the blast, and appeared in relief against the marked sky—the corpse of Grooves!—He whose sentence of death the Admiral proposed to a drum-head court-martial, the officers of which were all too much enslaved to condemn such an unjustifiable murder.

“ Well, Captain Grummet,” said the Admiral to his inferior, as they stood apart on the weather side of the quarter-deck, we have secured provisions enough in the poop-cabin for to-night, but while we have the darkness in our favour, it is advisable that we should obtain further supplies for to-morrow through the ward-room steward. Thank Heaven! we have checked these villains for to-night. I think they’ve had enough of it; we shall now be able to give our men some breathing.—Ha! the scoundrels are firing the ship—see the flames burst from the forecastle—yet—is it?—no—what—good Heavens!—here they come once

more!—To your guns men, to your guns—stand to your arms—they come!”

Fatigued with the repeated skirmishes of the day, the loyal party had, after the last repulse, flung themselves down to take a little rest, they now sprung up, alarmed at the cry of their superior, and beheld a fierce and lurid flame towering from the forecastle, and flickering away to leeward, while the dull red gleam sent forth, rested on the sail bellying above them, the spars, and ropes; then casting a fiery glow on the savage faces of the seamen, holding their flambeaux, it became reflected on the startled and pallid countenances thronging the quarter-deck, while the last retiring gleam, ere it shot away into empty space, fell for an instant on the human pendulum at the cross-jack yard-arm. There, alas! it displayed the worn features which a violent death had convulsed, and the long queue lifted by the tempest like a pennon from its mast.

This last conspicuous object did not escape the penetrating glance of Græme, nor was he slow in answering the Admiral's alarm, pointing with his naked sword to the suspended body, while with his left hand, he waved the flaming brand above his

head, he shouted, "There, my boys, there's your murdered shipmate; who shall cut him down first? Revenge or death! three cheers and on!"—The wild huzzas that followed had scarcely burst forth, when away they rushed along the gangways shouting defiance, and shaking their tarry torches aloft until the particles of fire that fell from them, made it seem like some torrent of flame whose uncontrollable fury had burst all bounds, and now brought ruin to every thing that opposed its inundation—

On they go—the ship rolls—they deviate on one side—they seize the nearest object to support themselves—she rights—away they rush again with yells still fiercer than before—they speed to the barricade—they are within one brief yard of it, when flash succeeds flash, the roar of cannon, the whizz of shot, the screams and oaths that rise upon the wind, proclaim the discharge of the guns defending the quarter-deck, loaded with langridge and grape.—They pause—the ship rolls—many of them fall—some never to rise—others bearing flambeaux whose flames crackle—hiss—and then lie quenched in gore.—But in vain!—once again they rise, a voice of thunder is crying—

"This is your time! up my hearts! up! re-

venge or death !”—They recover their panic—they press the barricade with ten-fold vigour—Græme is among them all, shouting and encouraging ; while his cutlass flashes right and left in the red light, like the avenging angel’s brand.—Cry upon cry succeeds ; now “ *England* ”—now “ *Revenge*,” the latter mounts the highest, the first begins to be feebly spoken—the old Admiral’s voice wears faint and hoarse—they shrink—The flambeaux are tossed among them, they fall back—the hammocks are left more unguarded—the mutineers redouble their efforts, they fire the barricade itself—the Admiral’s party are surrounded by a circle of raging flame.—In vain does the old man fly from side to side, they attend not to his rallying words, but continue to fall back—he sees it is vain—now he gives up the quarter-deck as lost—hark ! his word of command. “ To the poop, men,—retreat all of you to the poop ! ”—the burning barricade is now entirely forced, still he fights to the last, retreating backward like a stag at bay—he gains the poop ladder, his foot is upon the first step of it—now upon the second—now the third—He is encircled in front by the mutinous seamen, one gigantic form is opposed to him, who lifts his ruddy cutlass,

while a scowl of savage exultation is visible on his countenance as the blow descends.—An officer's sword from above is suddenly interposed—the men seize the Admiral's collar from behind, and drag him up safe from the combatants, whose blows he is yet warding off in front—now they cut the lashing of the ladder, it falls,—they are secure.

“Give quarter—the bloody tyrant has escaped! —Give quarter!” cried Græme, as he flew in various directions amid the burning remains of the barricade, whose hammocks, some in flames, some only smouldering and fanned by the wind, lay scattered about the deck. “Put out the flames, lads; fling the burning wreck overboard, pick up these poor fellows, and see if you cannot secure the shot that are scudding about the decks,” he continued, giving such directions as were necessary to restore some portion of order; since the better to secure the barrier, the officers had lashed capstan bars from gun to gun across the deck, to which the hammocks were secured; while inside were piled shot-boxes of langridge, canister and grape, besides heaps of cannon balls. On the dispersion of these articles from their original arrangement, the motion of the ship made

them roll from side to side, threatening destruction to all those legs which met them in their destructive course.

Is it not, indeed, a matter of astonishment to a reflecting being, when he beholds the constant struggle around him to preserve that wretched boon—existence? Since at every turn of life, for one scene of happiness and enjoyment, ten thousand modifications of woe, misery, and discontent, present themselves? Happiness? alas! it belongs not to this world—even wealth, that philosopher's stone among the moderns, draws its possessor far away from it. Neither can it abide with poverty; no, nor any of the intermediate states between. Alas! it dwells where those best acquainted with its habitation must most despair to find it.

CHAPTER XII.

“ Come child of misfortune, come hither,
I’ll weep with thee, tear for tear.”

MOORE.

WE will now descend from the struggle of the fiercest passions to that of the most tender, though it would be idle attempting to describe which was most agonizing to the sufferers.

On the larboard side of the orlop deck was situated the gunner’s cabin, corresponding in form and dimensions with that of the carpenter’s berth already described. Within it were seated three figures, the dim light falling from a purser’s dip-candle, discerning them to be those of Mrs. Somers, her servant, and the captive of the poop. The former was seated with her back against the bulkhead, nursing her child; upon whose face slowly fell those drops of anguish which the terrified mother vainly attempted to repress. The

servant leant on the table and sobbed aloud, convulsed with despair; while the third person, seated near his lovely charge, warmly but respectfully endeavoured to offer all the consolation in his power.

“ You are kind, Mr. * * *, said the lady, “ very kind, to devote the time that I am sure ought to be employed in thinking of your own preservation, to taking care of me—I who have not the slightest claim on you.”

“ A lady in distress, Mrs. Somers,” replied the prisoner, “ has ever the most imperative claim on my attention; and as for self-preservation, if your fears should be realized, we must all share a similar fate; there is no escape. Nor could I scarcely wish it—one who has so long been the butt of male tyranny, feels a pleasure in the society of the fairer creation, even in scenes of death. But do allow me to hold out to you the hope of our surviving the gale.”

“ ‘Surviving,’ Mr. * * *! Is it not utterly impossible? Did not that man tell you just now that the ship’s leaks were increasing as well as the wind, while they go on fighting as if they were wolves, and not the works of God’s hand.”

“ But Græme sent —— ”

—“ I will not blame the unfortunate seaman, he has suffered enough to urge him to any lengths of desperation—Oh! who would have thought that the Admiral could nurse such blood-thirsty feelings in his heart—to hear his fair words too—dooming us all to such a horrible end.—My poor Somers! —my darling son! he will never see thee more; the rude waves will be thy cradle.—Oh! what would I not give to see him once more; to clasp him before I die, or even to hear one word, though it were only farewell—aye! or to send one line to tell him we are lost—if I thought I could do this—if I could only dream that suspense would be spared him, that he would not go on hoping month after month, even year after year, for a recovery which never can take place—as if these relentless waves would disgorge their prey—why should they, when human beings will not be turned aside from their deadly hate, even though the wrath of the Lord should clothe itself in tempests to forbid them? No, it is right we should—I will not arraign—but it does seem as if—Ah! how can I help grieving that the innocent should suffer for the guilty—to think that he should be

given up to all those horrors of doubt. Oh! too well I know their gnawing; but it must soon be over, dear little one! and then we shall sleep quietly together." And she lifted the infant in her arms, while a fresh gush of tears burst forth, and seemed to lull the paroxysm of her grief, as the drops that fall from heaven have power to still the perturbed sea.

"If this be in reality what you feel, Mrs. Somers, I think I can in some measure lessen your cares," said the prisoner.

"How? tell me, dearest sir, I beseech you!"

"The plan I was about to propose is one to which recourse is often had in extremities, and has been found successful in conveying the certain intelligence of ships being lost. It consists simply in making out the statement in writing, and enclosing the document in a bottle, which being carefully sealed up, is thrown overboard, to float until picked up by some other vessel—this you can do now, keeping it by you in case of an emergency. By writing thus to your husband, it will at least afford you the satisfaction of thinking that he is to be spared all suspense."

"Heaven be praised! Lose not an instant, I

pray you, dear sir, in assisting me to execute your contrivance! Every moment is precious; where shall I get a sheet of paper? Rouse up! Anna, and see if you can get to my cabin."

"Do not disturb her, Mrs. Somers—it would be impossible for her to find her way, even if she were not as she evidently is, lost in stupor.—I will obtain every thing that is necessary." Saying which, the prisoner arose and left the cabin, returning in a few minutes with a writing-desk and a wine-bottle. Having unlocked the former, and laid out a sheet of paper, he placed it before Mrs. Somers.

"Do, dear sir, take charge of this poor child for a few seconds, while I write," said the mother, placing her infant in the prisoner's arms. Then seizing a pen, she attempted her task.

"What can I say, good God! what can I express—not the unutterable anguish of this moment!" exclaimed the unhappy lady, after a vain effort, pressing her hand upon the youthful brow, where the glittering tresses escaping, wreathed a face of heavenly beauty. "Alas, the tears which blister the paper are the only marks I can trace.—It is right—it is right," she continued,

“such a tale of woe and blood should be traced by tears—and yet I ought to say—if but one word” trying again,—“no, it is in vain, I must resign the task to you, sir,—tell him—tell him I—could have written much—very much, that my—heart was bursting to pour its grief to him—tell him—that I feared not death, but as it reft me from him for ever—and oh! the thoughts of that has maddened me too much to write a line.”

“Calm yourself, my dear madam,” the prisoner replied, gently laying his hand on hers, as its white and delicate fingers resigned the pen which trembled within their grasp,—“Remember, this is but a last resource, in case your apprehensions should prove true.”

“True,—you know they will prove true, though you have the delicacy not to say so,—too true.”

“It is probable, I grant; it were needless to deny it. It will not avail, however, to debate the point,—I will write the most irksome part of the statement relating to the ship, and you will then be sufficiently composed to add a few brief lines to your husband.”

“I fear it will be vain to try; here, however, is the pen. I can never return your kindness.” Re-

ceiving it from Mrs. Somers, the prisoner hastily wrote as follows:—

“H. M. S. ———,
“Off the Isle of France,
“9 P.M., * * day of * * * * *

“The ship’s company having mutinied and disputed the ship from deck to deck, and the vessel herself having sprung a severe leak during the gale which is now raging, the probability of her foundering at sea is fully apparent to all on board. To the end of making such a fate known and certain to those who may be interested, this statement is drawn up and enclosed; as the bottle containing the same will not be thrown overboard until the catastrophe is inevitable, the person finding this said bottle is conjured to take the earliest opportunity of giving publicity to these facts in England, and forwarding the following to Lieutenant Somers, Royal Bengal Artillery. Care of Messrs. * * * and * * *, E. I. agents, Leadenhall-street, London.”

Having read this to Mrs. Somers, he begged her to add a few lines, whatever might be their tenor, when once more resuming the pen, she hurriedly wrote the following lines:—

“The above, my beloved Frederick, will explain all—nothing is left for me to say, except that your wife and infant are among those so shortly doomed to perish.—I am almost frantic. I do not fear—but oh! to be thus cruelly snatched away! God bless you,—never forget that I thought of you to the last. Julia Somers.”

“Thank God it is over!—‘surely the bitterness of death is past,’—Come here my darling, we at least will die together,” and the affectionate mother pressed her infant to her breast and wept afresh, while the prisoner proceeded to seal up that sad testimony of human woe, and prepare the brittle case for its consignment to the flood. This finished, Mrs. Somers entreated him to take it up and fling it overboard at once, lest the ship, suddenly going down, might prevent it altogether; however, on his representing to her the distress it might occasion should they not realize the dreadful supposition, she consented to a little delay, but insisted on his going on deck to see how matters stood, despite of all his entreaties to remain below with her.

Having reached the fore-castle, and walked aft, he found that since the last encounter the quarter-

deck had been in a great measure cleared by the exertions of Græme, who had directed the men in getting out some of the small boats from the booms; by laying these athwart the deck near the mainmast, he had contrived a shelter from the Admiral's fire for his men. Into these boats he had flung some sixty of the men's clothes-bags, filled with the sand for washing decks, thus presenting a very formidable barrier to the enemy's shot. The guns drawn aft from the forecastle, Græme had once more conveyed forward as far as the waist. Here he lashed two of them securely to the deck, and pointing their muzzles towards the stern, menaced the party on the poop. Behind this were crowded the mutineers, whose rough and scowling faces, turned towards the Admiral's place of refuge, seemed to anticipate the joy of that moment when they should seize him as the victim of their unpitying vengeance. Oaths, jests, threats and execrations accompanied the mention of his name, while any ideas of mercy that they might have entertained at the commencement of the mutiny, seemed to have been banished from their breasts by the obstinacy of his defence and the loss of life which it had occasioned.

Involuntarily shuddering as he passed through this group, the prisoner made his way towards Græme, busily occupied with the duties of his command.

“I was in hopes that the work of slaughter would have been over by this time,” said he, addressing the chief of the rebels, whose soiled dress and grimed features spoke of the late fray.

“‘Work of slaughter!’” fiercely repeated Græme, glaring at the prisoner, whom he did not immediately recognize—then continuing, “Ah! Mr. * * *, is it you? Yes—I too had hoped it would have now ceased, but that bloody-minded old man seems determined to have his throat cut, and I can’t prevent it, the crew are so much enraged against him for his resistance that it would be madness for me to attempt it.—Attempt it, did I say?” angrily correcting himself. “Never—he shall die, aye like a murderous tyrant as he is.—‘Save him?’ did I think of Grooves when I uttered such a word? Did I think of my wife at Tyburn? and my children in the work-house? Did I think of my shipmates lying dead around me? Did I recall whose blood it is that is sprinkled on my face—that of my brother seamen!”

adjusting the bandage on his wounded arm, "Did I think of his ferocious blasphemy uttered before he came to sea? Did I remember that a wanton whim gave a thousand lives to the chance of such a leaky tub's reaching England in safety? Did I remember the selfish barbarity that brought us upon this boundless brine, with water that brutes would deem too nauseous to drink? Did I remember the whole course of his tyrannies and those linked with him, and talk of mercy?—Never! if I did, the world should trample on my neck, and spit their scorn on me in passing! Never! I say again, he shall die in a way he least expected, and though this ship does 'go to *hell*,' he shall NOT go in her. And this I swear by my murdered wife, my murdered messmates and every wrong they have heaped upon our slavish condition," saying which, he raised the naked sword which during his speech he had pointed towards the poop, and struck it furiously against the hammock-rail. The steel coming in contact with one of the iron stanchions, shattered into atoms. He gazed on it furiously for a few moments, while his lip quivered with rage

and scorn, then hurling it from him into the waves beneath, exclaimed, "Yes, perish like this faithless blade!"—The prisoner remained mute. He was indeed surprised at the change which appeared in the prisoner's views, but he had miscalculated the effects of such intense excitement, if he imagined that it was to leave a combatant drenched in the blood of his fellow-creatures and infuriated at a protracted and desperate resistance, the same cool character that it found him.

"Well, Mr. Græme," he returned, "you are their chief, you must therefore be the best judge of what ought to be done in such a case. Heaven knows I have no need to plead the Admiral's cause, nor will I. I consider there is justice in what you say; though I will not take it upon me, in this awful hour, to be the judge of my fellow creatures; yet consider, whatever you may think of his conduct and his deserts, you are bound, if possible, to spare the blood of your own men, as well as that of those who are opposed to you."

"Spare their blood, Mr. ***! God knows I wish to spare their blood, but I scarcely see how it is to be accomplished."

“ I grant,” returned the prisoner, “ it is difficult, but still let not that deter you from making the attempt.”

“ Sending them another messenger to hang is out of the question,” interrupted Græme.

“ I know it—I would not propose such a thing, but you may safely summon them with a speaking-trumpet from here, holding your men in readiness to storm the poop if they return good for evil by any aggression.”

“ Well, Mr. * * *, there is some truth in that, but what are the proposals you would make?”

“ Quarter to every one on throwing down his arms, except the Admiral.”

“ And do you think for a moment, that he will let them accede to that?”

“ If he has any feelings of honour he will; and I think that it is just possible——”

“ Possible, Mr. * * *; but no more; and supposing that fails what expedient have you next for saving bloodshed?”

At this question of Græme’s, the prisoner remained musing in silence for a minute, and then replied, “ Should this fail, I would offer them a truce of half an hour, in order that such officers as were

unconnected with the ship, should come down and see their wives, with free permission to rejoin the Admiral at the expiration of that time. That they would do this I think very improbable; and then in the interval, ten to one but many of the men would take advantage of the moment to desert over to us."

"Ha! that scheme is good; we'll put that in execution at once, Mr. ***; I'll just go and mention it to Kavanagh and Macpherson, meanwhile you stay here," said Græme, departing to take the necessary steps.

In a few minutes he returned with his colleagues, bearing a speaking-trumpet in his hand. Having hastily mentioned his project among the men, to prevent any misconception, the carpenter advanced to the mainmast, and taking his station under its lee to prevent his being seen and shot at by the Admiral, he hailed the poop as follows.

"Poop, ahoy!"

"The gale blows it to leeward; they don't hear, Bo," said Kavanagh, after an interval of a minute, hail again, and send it well up to windward."

Following these instructions, the carpenter repeated in still louder tones the same summons;

when presently was heard, in the hoarse accents of the Admiral, the reply.

“Mutineers, holloa?”

“—— his * * eyes,” exclaimed the enraged seamen, while a movement was evident among the crowd, as this daring answer was heard.

“Hush, my lads, hush,—let the old ruffian swagger it out, we’ll have him by and by,” said Græme, restraining his crew; then applying the trumpet to his lips again—

“Officers, seamen, and marines, now upon the poop of H. M. S. —— . We, the ship’s company, summon you to lay down your arms and surrender. Quarter shall be given to all of you except Admiral ——.” When this summons was finished, the old veteran himself, whose figure being distinguishable to windward, was seen to retreat for a few seconds and join a knot of men, probably his officers, behind him, who, in a few seconds, advanced in a body to the break (edge) of the poop, when the Admiral, returning the hail, said:—

“Mutineers! We, His Majesty’s officers commanding the ——, will listen to no terms of

which the first article does not stipulate for your immediate return to your duty."

"Down with him, he tmurdering old hellhound. Aft with us, Mr. Græme, let us pitch the old —— to the devil," roared the seamen, brandishing aloft their cutlasses.

"Stay, shipmates, stay a few minutes more; they can't escape us long, the Admiral you shall have to do what you like with, but surely you'd wish to save the lives of your old watchmates and shipmates,—many of them that have eaten out of the same kids* with you."

"Aye, Mr. Græme is right. Save the blue jackets, but * * the old Admiral and marines," returned the men, abjuring their former wrath.

"Now then, Mr. Græme, since you can do no better, I would propose a truce," said the prisoner.

"I will," replied Græme, hailing again.

"Admiral ——, since you have thought proper to interfere with a proposal that was made to save the lives of those under you, and not your own, may God make you answerable for the blood shed

* Kids—vessels in which provisions are served out to the messes.

in consequence, as well as that already spilt. As, however, you will let no terms be accepted but those of our submission—which is folly—we offer you a truce for half an hour, that such soldier-officers as do not belong to the ship, may visit their friends in the ward-room cabin. And we bind ourselves to let them join you again at the expiration of that time, if such be their pleasure: meanwhile all firing or other fighting shall cease between us.” A pause of some minutes ensued, and then the answer was heard.

“ We accept your truce.” When Græme demanded—

“ And on what shall we rely that you will keep it faithfully ?”

“ On the honour of a British Admiral,” sternly replied the speaker. “ But how, mutineers, shall we trust you ?”

“ By a nobler, a more untarnished gage, the good faith of British seamen.”

“ Hurrah, hurrah ! Græme,” shouted his men, on comprehending this repartee ; then pausing, and hearing nothing farther, they climbed their artificial sand-bank, and rushed aft to see the officers come down.

The Admiral, with a pistol in his grasp, stood at the head of the ladder placed for their descent. After some bustle on the poop, as if to make way for them to pass through—one solitary old man descended! A pocket handkerchief was swathed round his head, under his battered uniform-cap, apparently to stanch some wound. From beneath this straggled forth his thin grey locks, stained with the purple current so remorselessly shed; while he appeared scarcely able to support himself with the aid of his sheathed sword. It was General —.

“But where are the other soldiers?” demanded many voices.—Their campaigns were closed for ever—theirs was the enjoyment of a truce which no mortal force could annul or treachery interrupt. All were dead saving him who now went below to see once more the partner of his life, and then bid adieu to both.

Struck with respect and touched as it were with remorse, the crew silently and mournfully gave way, and allowed a passage for the old officer to pass below.

“Back, sir, back!” exclaimed the Admiral, drawing the attention of the crew from so sad a

spectacle, "you belong to the ship, sir, and cannot pass, you are not included in the truce—back I say, sir, you belong to the ship!"

"Alas, most worthy sir, I unfortunately do," replied the stout personage whom the flag-officer attempted to repress, "yet I beseech you hinder me not, peradventure the good men—I beg pardon—peradventure the mutineers"—speaking the last word in a whisper, and then raising his voice again—"will allow me to pass, seeing that I belong not to the sect militant, and that our cloth wages no contention save with the spirit"—"and *water*,' say, you drunken old vagabond," added the Admiral, giving the applicant a kick that sent him rolling over the ladder on the deck below.

Gradually the discomfited individual arose, displaying to view the burley person of the ship's chaplain.

Rubbing with both hands the part affected, he looked up towards the Admiral with much composure, half muttering, "Spirit and water you say?—so I will," and then toddled down the hatchway as speedily as his half inebriated state would permit.

"These two persons comprise all who intend

to take advantage of your truce," sullenly said the Admiral.

"Very well," replied Græme, and having placed some sentries from his own men before the poop, he gave orders to Macpherson to proceed below and serve out to the men an extra allowance of grog. This indeed their fatigues rendered necessary, and while they are drinking this we shall have time to ascend to the Admiral's quarters.

In the late fatal *melée*, the whole number of those who had contrived to escape to this last hold of power, did not amount altogether to more than one hundred and fifty, one moiety of which was composed of marines. The Admiral on hearing the summons, and finding that he was the chief object of vengeance, made an offer of delivering himself up, as the prisoner had conjectured; this, however, the officers at first refused, and the proposal was not pressed a second time. Nor was the prisoner more mistaken in what referred to the desertion of the men, until the flag-officer having observed some half a dozen quietly take their departure, found himself under the necessity of posting four junior officers with loaded muskets, as sentinels on the break of the poop. These had orders to shoot the first deserter.

He then summoned his men around him and said:

“ I call you together, my men, that I may indulge myself in the pleasure of thanking you from my heart for the conduct which I have observed in you this evening. For the forty years—more or less—during which my life and services have been devoted to my country, it has never been my lot to witness a more daring and admirable display of courage and intrepidity than that which you have exhibited within these few hours. Exposed to the fury of a gale, cut off from all refuge, denied those means of recruiting your strength which are accessible to the mutineers, opposed at the same time by a body of men exceeding yourselves in bulk, and headed by one whose ferocity and cunning are equal to the perpetration of any villainy—you yet rally around the standard of your country and the officers of your King, unsubdued in heart, however lessened in numbers. You yet live to bid defiance to their bloody threats, and to execute just punishment on these rebels. I see around me the best men that my ship ever contained; and among the mutineers are the scum

and refuse of gaols and prison-ships. Ever since the entrance of these men on board, they have skulked their duty to throw it on you;—you therefore have to thank them for sharing before now, all those punishments which they alone had deserved. It has now come to a trial between you; we shall soon see who are to be victorious, thieves and burglars fresh from their loathsome prisons, their dens of crime and villainy, and unaccustomed to the sea—or you who have many of you been born upon—more of you brought up on it, from your boyhood, and surely I may say *all* of you honest, able, and gallant seamen.

“ Compare the differences under which you fight—on your side is the cause of your sovereign and the laws, against which these men are in arms.—You are headed by the officers whom you are bound to obey, and have the advantage of their knowledge and abilities, as well as of that exact discipline to which you have always been happily accustomed.—By our dead-reckoning we are rapidly nearing the Isle of France, before arriving at which, we can scarcely fail to meet with some ship eager to afford us all the succour in her power,

Even now we are in all probability in the neighbourhood of some such vessel whom we are prevented from seeing by the storm alone.

“Fortune never deserts the truly brave. Within the short lapse of two hours the gale may moderate, the night clear off, and we may find at hand some friendly sail. By the mercy of Providence we have been enabled to get sufficient provisions for twenty-four hours—the power that has given that to our prayer can give us more. Remember, *we* fight for our lives and good name, since our enemies have mutinied and our existence endangers their safety. You must be prepared for their desperate attempts, since they fight each of them with a halter round their necks. Already they are half given up to licence and confusion; attend to the tumult which rises from between decks.—They scarcely obey the wretched villain they have chosen to head them.—He is but their equal, for they, poor fools, will acknowledge no superior. What can result from such madness but disorder and division? Again, they are the attacking party, we have but to defend a position naturally strong, and now improved by every suggestion of art.—They have to rout veteran seamen—we but to

maintain our ground before rash idlers and landmen unorganized and inebriated, and trusting only to brutal force or malignant rage. You cannot doubt which is to be victorious.

“Once more, my men, my gallant men, I thank you.—Come what will, there is not one here who has not proved himself a hero, and I only entreat you to remember that it is our imperative duty, whether attacked or not, to put down mutiny or perish in the attempt. He who acts otherwise is himself a mutineer; whereas, on our successful return to England, think of the honours and rewards that will be yours. You will be placed in ease for the remainder of your days. Hold out, then, my brave boys, for a brief space longer—its duration can be but trivial—the palm of victory is almost in your hands—and bear in mind what a prize will be yours when it is firmly grasped. You never have feared death in your country’s cause, even for a less prize—at the worst, you are threatened with no more. You cannot, you will not, doubt it now. Let our motto be, ‘Hold out to the last, and three cheers for old England!’” The Admiral waved his hat, his officers and men followed his example, but the

cheer came forth from exhausted lips, and was faint and weak compared to the cry of "Revenge!" with which it was immediately answered from the quarter-deck by the mutineers. Of this the Admiral took no notice; but having finished his remarks, he proceeded to complete his arrangements for the recommencement of the fray.

Not content, however, with trying to rouse their moral courage, he also remembered their personal wants, freely distributed the spirits and provisions which, with his usual foresight and providence, he had procured from the ward-room steward and caused to be placed in reserve upon the poop.

So universal is the dominion of genius, that these men, who in secret hated his character, and knew him as the tyrant against whom it was no injustice to rebel, yet felt a fresh courage and reliance in so desperate a situation, from beholding the cool and determined bearing of their superior. Nay, further, instead of execrating him more bitterly than ever, as the origin of all their dangers, they implicitly believed in all the assertions which he had made with so much art and deceit; and felt in that lone hour, an inde-

scribable attachment which the years of his former command had never excited. Truly, there is no task, however gigantic, over which ability and perseverance may not rise triumphant.

We will now return to the quarter-deck, where, as Græme was standing by the companion-ladder, the form of the old general suddenly presented itself before him. His face, from which all marks of the combat had been cleansed away, wore a subdued but melancholy expression, as he endeavoured with feeble steps to regain the poop.

"The truce will not expire yet for ten minutes, Sir; you need be in no hurry," said Græme, in a soothing tone of voice, thinking that he might have mistaken the time allowed.

The general turned round, and after narrowly examining the person who addressed him, replied, "I believe, sir, it is you who have undertaken to command these misguided men?"

"If, sir, you mean to inquire whether my name is Græme, and whether it is I whom the ship's company have chosen to assert their rights, I reply, yes."

"It *was* that—but it signifies little," continued the general, "to dispute as to mere names, when

we shall all be so shortly called to render a final account of all our deeds. I thank you for your intimation that the truce is not yet expired—it is now however all one to me.”

“But surely General, Lady ——,” mentioning the name of his wife, “has a greater claim on your time than the officers of a ship with which you are unconnected?”

“I beg pardon, sir. Neither Lady ——, nor any other individual of my family ever possessed so great a claim on my attention as my sovereign’s cause—but now, Lady —— can claim my care no more; the screams of the wounded and the roar of your cannon have effected for her more than your shot have granted to me—an escape from this scene of horror. On entering my cabin, I found that my wife was no more. My most cherished hopes will now be accomplished. I shall pour forth in the service of my king the remains of a life devoted to him from youth.”

“’Tis a pity so brave a man should perish! Are you determined, sir, on this unavailing sacrifice?”

“I am—pray let me pass.”

“I will, sir,” and Græme moved aside. “To such a worthy officer I should be sorry to refuse

any thing, but more especially, since you prefer death—an end so honourable, and to a soldier, I must add, so dear.”

The general, who was about to depart, paused, and taking the hand of Græme in that of his own, said with much emotion—“ You acknowledge that it is an honourable death, and you think that it is a dear one ? ”

“ I do, sir.”

“ Then let me beseech you, as you would like to die such a death in your old days, to return to your duty. I am an old officer; that my grey hairs will testify; I have seen many fields and much service, but I never yet heard of mutiny that bettered its ringleaders, or that did not bring them to a disgraceful end. Consider how many lives are at stake, and for God’s sake return to your duty. I myself solemnly undertake to use every interest for your pardon.”

“ The thing is impossible, sir,—for me—life is but a continuation of my miseries, then what matters the empty bubble—name? It might have tempted me once, but never now—the death to me the most desirable, is the speediest.—Can the nation restore to me my wife,—pure, dear, and

spotless as when I was torn from her arms? It makes me mad to think—no, Sir, no!—‘return to duty?’—absurd! but I will restrain my passion, you meant it kindly I know—and since it may not be any better, I wish you a speedy and an easy escape from woe, venerable sir; and had this ship only been commanded by an officer like you, we should now have been quietly returning to our homes,—though *I* might not have been less wretched than I am, thanks to this galley slavery:—sir, you are free.”

As Græme said this, he gently disengaged his hand, and turned sharply away among his men to prepare for the expiration of the truce. The general finding himself alone, quickened his steps and regained the poop.

CHAPTER XIII.

“ Thus unlamented pass the proud away,
The gaze of fools, the pageant of a day.
So perish all, whose breasts ne’er learn’d to glow
For others’ good, or melt at others’ woe.”

POPE.

THE wind, which but a short time before had showed some signs of moderating, now appeared to increase, while the quick heavy rolls of the straining hull convinced Græme that if he wished to attempt the saving of the ship, the struggle now pending must be quickly decided. The sea also began to wear that luminous appearance which it frequently exhibits, and he therefore became anxious to have the ship in his own keeping before the phenomena of the former night should alarm his men by their return.

Having sounded the note of preparation, and

gathered all his party behind the boats where he ordered them to crouch down, he brought his two guns to bear on the poop, loaded with cannister-shot. Taking his speaking trumpet in his hand, he hailed—"Poop ahoy!"—

"Mutineers, holloa!"—

"The truce has expired—are you ready?"—

The answer "yes!" was scarcely heard, when its sound was drowned in the roar of the Admiral's cannon, who judging that an immediate attack on him was designed by the rebels, determined to be beforehand, in hopes of sweeping many of them off. In this he was led astray by his ignorance of their position, it being too dark to see their boats.

"Up, lads, up!" cried Græme, springing from his shelter behind the mast.—"Return the old rascal's fire and board him in the smoke."

Quick—as the bitterest enmity could desire—flashed forth the rebels' guns, and away they sprang, yelling like a herd of wolves to reach their destined prey, before another fire could take place. In the former struggle, the bulwark near the poop had been very much shot away, on both sides,

so that the sea now and then made a complete breach over her. As the men strode on, the ship gave a weather roll, and descending from the crest of a wave into the trough of the sea, she struck her weather-side against one of the green billows, which, mounting upwards, poured its vast volume of water on her deck, washing off twenty human beings into the boiling surf to leeward. But to man's revenge what offers an obstacle? Unheeding the smothered groans of their sinking comrades, or feeling yet more incensed at their origin, they pressed forward with additional fury.

“Macpherson, place your ladders!” roared out Græme—in an instant up sprung from under the Admiral's poop-cabin, a band of eighty men, bearing a dozen ladders that had been taken from different parts of the ship, and setting these firmly against the combing (or edge) of the deck above, the mutineers clambered up them with irresistible fury, headed by Græme, and following their powerful leader in such a swarm as almost to press him on in spite of all resistance. It were but a vain repetition to go through the cries of havock that soared above the roar of the tempest

on either side, "Revenge!"—"The King!" were knells that night to many a brave man, whose death would have honoured a nobler cause.

The Admiral's party, though startled at the stratagem which rendered their little fortress pregnable, were not easily daunted. Thrice did Græme attempt to get a footing—twice he crossed swords with the old Admiral himself; the last time having succeeded in giving his superior a slight flesh-wound in the right arm, the latter was obliged for a moment to retreat, when his opponent, following up his advantage, got a secure stand and pushed his success.

Silently, and with an indescribable fury, did they fight unheeded for nearly a minute, the Admiral's superior use of his weapon being counterbalanced by his wound—worn and exhausted as he was, it was evident he could not maintain such a fight.

"Yield! Admiral——, Yield! You Tyrant! yield! or I'll cut you into meat for your dogs!" thundered his antagonist with the foam frothing on his lips.

"Never, you mutinous villain, never!" hoarsely

retorted the desperate old warrior, making a lunge which was successfully parried.

“Here’s the bloody-minded villain, here’s the Admiral!” sang out a seaman who had been seeking for the especial object of their vengeance, and had heard Græme name his rank. “Hurrah! my lads, here’s the old badger, let’s catch him alive!”

A shout of joy burst from the seamen, and pouring onward they were about to execute this injunction, when the captain, whose ears had been equally faithful, called to the officers still fighting near him, as well as the few men who yet survived the slaughter and had not yet submitted, “Save the Admiral! fall back and save the Admiral!” Faithful in this, if in nought else, he sprang to his superior’s side just as the heavy blade of Græme was descending through the air. To strike it upward with his sword and cry, “Off, villain! Hey for the king!”—was the work of a second, and then placing himself before his commander’s person, he secured to him a retreat.

“‘Villain!’” cried the infuriated Græme—“To hell, you monster! and see if such be not the title of the tyrant who strikes for slavery. Yes,

to hell, I say!—Since you take the Admiral's place, why not his portion too?" He beat aside the captain's guard, and, before it was recovered, his sword, urged onward by the leap of his huge body, passed through Grummet's neck, dividing the principal blood-vessels in its course.

Pressing his foot on the prostrate corpse to extricate his weapon, he passed on to the knot of seamen gathered round the Admiral, who, encircled with the poor fragment of his officers—their rear resting on the bulwark—fought with a desperation not even exceeded by the fury of revenge.

One after one, as the grating death-stroke of some ponderous blade crashed in the brain of a defender, arose a yell of savage triumph, until the chief who lately had a thousand dauntless beings at his beck, now, through his tyranny, could name no living man on board who would not gladly have shed the last drop of his chief's blood—yet there he fought alone against them all!

"Now! my men, rush in upon him!" cried Græme, catching his sword point upon the edge of his own steel. Well was he obeyed, and in another instant the brave but relentless Admiral —,

was an unarmed prisoner, at the mercy of his too-justly enraged crew.

“Three cheers for *revenge*, boys!” demanded Kavanagh, and the wild hurras that arose in answer to the summons, seemed to contain in their tremendous compass but few notes of consolation for the captive.

Short was the suspense in which he was allowed to remain. “Bind the * * hand and foot!” was the cry, “and fist him down on the quarter-deck.” A rope was now passed round the Admiral’s extremities, and he was lowered down from the poop.

From the moment in which Græme beheld his tyrant taken, the fury and animation before so evident in his conduct seemed to flag, and falling back, a mere spectator of the scene, he surrendered up to the men and his colleagues in office, the task of executing vengeance on the oppressor’s head.

With that savage joy which but too often mingles in the triumphs of the uneducated, did Kavanagh and Macpherson set about their task. Having lowered Grooves down from the yard-arm, they conveyed the body to the gangway, where also was the Admiral; Græme followed.

After a short consultation, the mode of execution was resolved on, contrary to the wishes of their late chief, who found it useless to try and stem the torrent of rage that now bore the mutineers onward.

“Stop * him up neck and heels, Tom,” said Kavanagh, handing a fox * to Collins, who had accompanied Mr. * * *, the prisoner, on deck. Collins received the bandage, and was about to execute his orders, by tying the neck and feet of the Admiral to the corresponding parts of the corpse of Grooves, which, stiffened in death, was now supported upright on its feet by the seamen, back to back with its murderer. Just at this moment Græme thrust into his hand a slender rope-yarn, and whispered “Collins, use this instead.”

The seaman looked up, surprised to find any one befriending the Admiral; but observing in the mutineer’s manner the compassion and pity which he felt at seeing even his deadliest enemy subjected to so horrid a fate, he substituted the weaker ligature and took less pains in tying it securely than he would otherwise have done.

* “Stop,” a nautical word, signifying, to tie up. “Fox,” a little twist of doubled rope-yarn.

The Admiral himself—who since his capture had remained inflexibly silent—moved his head slightly, as if to take one stern and farewell look of the old ship, to preserve the worthless timbers of which he was about to meet such an awful fate. Suddenly that eye which quailed not at the near approach of death, caught the glance of the prisoner of the poop, whose melancholy and attenuated features formed a pleasant contrast with the ferocious blood-stained countenances around. Yes! such is the power of conscience: before that calm and quiet glance, the Admiral seemed to shrink into himself.

The prisoner said nothing, his arms were folded on his breast, and he seemed to meditate with “more of sorrow than of anger,” on the awful scene which he now witnessed.

“And *you* are here, too?” said the old man, hesitatingly, after a few seconds.

“I am, Sir.”

“I had thought you were not among these mutinous villains!”

“I drew no sword against you, Admiral ——, it is true; but not from a sense of compassion towards you, or from feeling that you have not deserved what has overtaken you; no—Heaven selected

agents enough;—moreover, it was on your side that Lieutenant H——n fought—nay fell, and therefore would I not oppose a cause which my dearest friend has hallowed by his death.” Rage, doubt, conviction, and repentance here showed their various changes on the fierce and yet fine face of the old warrior—the last prevailed.

“ If I *have* wronged any one, * * *, it is *you*—Can you forgive me?” and he extended his fettered hand towards the prisoner. This the latter heeded not, but turning away his head, replied—

“ Admiral ——, that you have wronged me *I* have long felt; I am happy that *you* now admit it. If Heaven forgives you as freely as myself, you may yet be happy.”

“ Give me your hand, boy,” interrupted the other, in tones that denoted the internal struggle. —“ I may have drawn the strings too tight—perhaps courage is not *all* that’s wanted; yet if you do weather this, my family——” but before he could complete the sentence, he was forcibly obliged to resign the hand which he had taken, being dragged away by the crew, who had summoned the chaplain from below to read the burial service over the body of Grooves.—Any consola-

tion for the Admiral, bound to so hideous a companion, was never contemplated. The reverend official, who had gone below to realize the hypothesis of his superior, by applying to the spirit-bottle, now made his appearance with faltering steps, bolstered up on either side by a sailor.

Having brought him opposite to the body, he showed symptoms of great terror; these were relieved by Kavanagh's desiring him to "read the dead-body riggulations over an old shipmate," while Collins, as an encouragement, gave him a slap over the back, exclaiming, "Come, my old Cock! let's have something short."

If in the midst of such conflicting circumstances, we recollect the non-compos state of his mind, we shall not be surprised at the clerical gentleman finding himself somewhat at a loss. After many ineffectual attempts to recollect himself, he turned to the men, and mumbled forth, "Really, good people, this—is—a—most *difficult* corpse of yours to bury—most *difficult* corpse ever had in my life."

"Very like, old chap, 'cause ye see one's alive."

"Oh alive, is he? that accounts for it—always more *difficult* when they're alive;" then extending his hands over the two heads, he muttered, "For

what we are going to receive, may we be very thankful!" then looking at his audience, hiccupped forth, "Sit down."

"Short commons," said Kavanagh, seeing that the divine had finished. "Now clear away a ring, my boys; two of ye seize the old villain's arms.—That's it.—So. Now Admiral ———, you said that if this ship went to hell, you'd go in her, did'nt ye?"

But the person questioned remained utterly silent, nor deigned to move a muscle of the rigidly composed countenance which already seemed to have fixed itself for ever.

"Well my hearties, as the old gemman won't answer, we'll save him the trouble, by telling him that he was never more out of his reckoning in all his life, for we'll be —— if he shall go there in such good company. Trip up the ould hellicat's legs. I heard him say it myself."

"And I," sung out several voices in the crowd, when three men appointed for the purpose jumped forward, and seizing the Admiral's feet in their powerful grasp, while several other seamen supported the arms, they maintained his body with

that of Grooves in a horizontal position, the latter being under.

“Turn the turtle with them, boys, face old Blue-beard undermost; an honest old sailor’s worth twenty o’ such —— tyrants as he!—That’s your sort. Now bring him here to this breach in the gunwale. Give three cheers—a cheer and a swing, and then launch ’em overboard.—Now then.—Ready lads?”

“All ready!”

“Make sail.—Hip, hip, hip, hurra!—Now again—hip, hip, hip, hurra!”

The last terrific cheer was scarcely given to the wind, when they were suddenly interrupted by a tremendous crash.

“Holloa! lads, there goes the mizen—belay with old Blue-beard a minute. That’s some more of his work. Jump up there some of ye, and clear away the wreck.”

This occupied but a short space; the rapid strokes of a few cutlasses soon severed the principal ropes which detained the spar alongside to leeward, and it gradually drifted astern.

“Now boys, another cheer, and old Nick gets a

hard bargainer."—Once more the note of death arose—"Hip, hip, hip, Hurra!" and with its last accent drifting on the gale to leeward, were plunged at once the living body and the lifeless corpse into the agitated surge beneath.

As the repeated yell of exultation gradually drew to a close, the powerful men to whom the task of jactation had been allotted, exerted all their strength, and hurled the object of their wrath many feet beyond the edge of the vessel respecting which he had uttered his vain blasphemy, thus sent with the victim of his tyranny, to render an account to Him who created in the semblance of His own image, alike the emperor and slave, the exalted and the low.

In falling, however, from this height, the bodies came in contact with the lee main-brace, one of the ropes that during the confusion had been slackened so far as to hang down in a semicircle from its different places of attachment. Launched down head foremost, this rope came exactly between the neck of the Admiral and that of Grooves, when the impetus of their descent carried away the rope-yarn by which they were fastened, and the bodies falling with the brace

between them, were arrested by its coming in contact with the ligature of the feet. Here they hung head downwards for the space of five seconds.

“Look, look!”—cried the men aghast, pointing down at the bodies which seemed to hang suspended in middle air. “They won’t sink—see to that—they won’t sink—fire a gun at ’em—ha! there go!”—as the rope-yarn gradually gave way and the bodies dividing fell into the sea, whose boiling surface lashed into foam, displayed the phosphorescence so singularly beautiful in the warmer climes.

“Think of that,” muttered the seamen to one another in suppressed tones. “Grooves would’nt let the ould villain go down with him.”

“‘Down with him’”—no!”—replied another. “Didn’t I see the dead body slew round, and grappling ould Blue-beard by the neck, snap the lashing as I would a piece o’ twice-laid yarn?”

“Holy man! what was’t made of?”

“‘Made of!’ why inch and a half rope,” responded the veracious informant, whose superstitious fancy exaggerated a slight rope-yarn into a rope an inch and a half in circumference.

Thus it buzzed from ear to ear until that subtle demon, the pigmy tyrant of our fancies, which rules alike our infancy and manhood, had wormed herself into those breasts where passion lately reigned in her most terrific mood,—passion, which to gratify its desires, had heeded neither the life of fellow man, the mysterious whisper of conscience, nor the known and acknowledged laws of God. True—but who raised that awful passion?—dread question!—just retribution! The tyrant who perished a sacrifice to its terrific power.

CHAPTER XIV.

“ Down sink the flames, and with a hiss expire ;
Thy hand, great Anarch, lets the curtain fall,
And universal darkness buries all ! ”

POPE.

IT was now over—the deed for which hundreds had bled, had at length been enacted; the Admiral, like a second Jonas, had been cast into the deep, and they were revenged: but unlike the storm of Scripture, the waves fell not, neither did the wind cease. On the contrary, they seemed gradually to rise in awful strength, and every evidence of an approaching tornado was seen to manifest itself. Rousing himself from the torpor into which he had temporarily fallen, Græme proceeded to resume the command; but he found the nerve which had once given life and a right feeling to the men, was now severed; there was no longer an enemy

to resist, no longer a mortal foe to subdue, though far more dire opponents now threatened them—superstition and the storm; they would not be united to see it, and each contented himself with shrinking from the supremacy which these last had gained over his own breast; they were no longer amenable to a superior.

In vain did the carpenter explain to them the cause of what they chose to deem supernatural; in vain did he point to the threatening horizon as pregnant with their fate.—All was unheeded. Macpherson was slain in the last assault, and Kavanagh was no more regarded than himself. Apathy, terror, and insubordination within, seemed allied with the tempest raging for their destruction without. Even the gangs at the pumps, which through all the carnage of the night, had never ceased to labour, even they now forsook their station, seeming rather to court perdition if allied to indolence, than safety with exertion. Having finally ascertained this to be the case, nothing further remained for Græme but to prepare himself for death. Alas! he whose dearest ties have been violently reft asunder, needs but little time to reconcile him to the change. His mind is already chastened and

drawn towards its great Creator by affliction—that stern tutor—that mortal Mentor, who, having unmasked one by one the glittering pageants of this world, has exposed the skeleton decaying beneath, and taught us that to the perspective futurity alone, may we look for that indefinable something,—be it bliss or contentment,—which is to satiate the restless cravings of the eternal soul.

Misfortune! bitter as thou art, and in thy first effects a stirrer up of rebellion,—here is thy chief good. Not only canst thou make the coward brave, but cool. When death is near, the most determined become sensible of that chain which linked them to the earth; and this by instinct. One glance around—one thought—a single reminiscence of the fact that those once dear have passed away,—that you stand alone—lorn—for-saken; then how should death possess a sting? There is a calm, a glorious greatness in that stern moment which rewards us even on this earth for the utter desolation of the heart from whose blood-steeped ashes it arose.

In two breasts at least, among the surviving crew, did these feelings reign supreme—those of Græme and the prisoner of the poop.

“It will soon be over now,” remarked the former in a calm tone of voice. “All command is gone—the gale increases—it will blow a regular tornado very shortly;—the leak gains on us hand over hand.”

“’Twill be a seaman’s death, Mr. Græme, however.”

“Aye, aye,—it matters little to me how soon it comes, but for that delicate, pretty lady below ’tis a sad fate. How could that iron-hearted old fellow ever allow her to put a foot in such a rotten tub?”

“Aye, how indeed?—But how can we be useful to her?”

“Ah Mr. * * *, I wish I knew.”

“Well, suppose you go below and try to comfort her. Say, that I am about to throw overboard the bottle with the letter, meanwhile I’ll try if I can reach the main-top and see if there’s anything like a vessel in company. I should not like to give this to the waves while there is any hope of the ship’s safety, so I’ll put it under cover till the last.”

“Have a heed what you’re about, the mast’s bitterly wounded, it totters as the gale puffs over it—I wanted the lazy hounds to fish it, but it’s all a gone-goose with them!”

“ Yes, it’s all over with command. I see that the spar is wounded, but with death at every turn, it scarce signifies talking of one path in particular.”

“ True, Mr. * * *. I had forgotten that. After living some forty years, custom makes a man hug so well-known a companion as misery without knowing it. Then I’ll be off below, I wish you may catch a sight of something if its only for poor Mrs. Somers—but maybe you had better step into the old Admiral’s cabin and sling his night-glass round your shoulders.”

“ Right, Græme, I never thought of that. Now then, make sail below, don’t forget my message to Mrs. Somers. I hope to have the pleasure of seeing her myself soon with good news from aloft.” Saying which, they separated on their several missions.

How slight and inadequate is even human fancy to imagine the scene that now presented itself throughout the decks of the seventy-four ! Inadequate even with those long accustomed to the sea, and to whom the form and localities of so large a vessel are familiar, but to a landsman unacquainted even with the barest notions re-

lating to such a huge floating village, no description can be sufficiently vivid and graphic to convey a picture true to its dread original.

Along the deck, among the guns, and in every nook which could afford the slightest shelter from the gale, were lying those poor wretches, who, disabled by wounds and writhing as well from their agony as from the parching thirst of death, had crept aside to die—their smothered groans mingling with the wild delirious screams of others whose pains and fears were too great for silence. The creaking of the vessel, the rolling of the guns broken from their tackles, the shouts of impotent rage and despair, the obscenities and blasphemies of those unconscious beings who had sought oblivion in intoxication, and the roar of the tempest, all were heard, all were distinctly adding to the Babel of sound that rose upon the troubled ear of night; but none carried to the heart of the hearer so mournful a reflection as the phrensied wail of woman, bursting from the after part of the ship;—mourning at once the violent bereavement of those most dear, and expressing the natural but unavailing horror of a death so little suited to their gentle sex.

That man should suffer is but natural, and to a sailor whose existence is one long scene not of mere misery, but dreary hardship, this dispensation appears anything but strange. — With woman, however, the case seems widely different; separated so long from one naturally so dear to him, and then beholding her solely in her “hours of ease” — the fount of life, gladness and beauty to all around — the contemplation in distress of this dear association of his brightest images, and the feeling that it is beyond his power to aid her, is to the generous bosom of a sailor an appeal most powerful of all.

Weakened, as the old hull naturally was, by the results of the fierce struggle so lately decided, — the wounding of beams by the shot, the cutting away of others on the lower deck, and the explosions which the last had been made to sustain, it excited little wonder that she should tremble in every timber, as the raging seas poured forth their fury on her bends, and mounting over her broken bulwarks, rushed across the quarter-deck; steeping in their phosphorescent waters the pale and ghastly corpses which strewed its planks. It was by this dim sepulchral light that a lady, whose affection had induced her to crawl up from the

ward-room cabin, was seen seeking her slaughtered husband.

Many were the disfigured countenances over which she anxiously bent, trying to recognize the lost one—but in vain. At last she found a body which had fallen in the death-struggle from the break of the poop, and now lay near the lee scuppers, where the bulwark was shot away. With frantic eagerness she stooped, passing her fingers over its pallid features, as if to ascertain their form—His dress?—it was a soldier. The faint glimmer, assisted by imagination, already more than half confirmed her suspicions,—in torturing suspense she waited the next illuming surge to resolve her doubt.—Hark! she hears the swell—the rush of waters—her strained eyes appear to start from their sockets—the billow mounts—it falls, and sweeps towards her with its glare of death.—“’Tis he! ’tis he!” was the cry but faintly heard, as she flung herself upon the body: lost in that dear yet dread embrace, she knew not how great was the volume of water pouring round her.—The ship yields beneath its force—she rolls to leeward, and as the brine pours onward, it sweeps into its parent deep, the warm fond heart that

sought, together with the insensible bosom which it found—found but in time to share in its final place of rest. That look of recognition was her last ! When next she gazed upon her lord, it was in the promised bowers of an eternal Paradise.

Every minute that flitted past, now seemed more and more to confirm the awful fate which they apprehended. On the lower-deck it was one scene of licence. Lavishly illuminated throughout with the candles taken from the purser's store-room, the glare displayed groups of seamen reeling about intoxicated ; others not so far advanced, were sitting over large casks of rum, hoisted up from the spirit-room, and broached with the most wanton profusion, until the consumers being in many instances too far gone to notice any thing, the barrels had slipped from their stations, and rolled about the deck, now literally flooded with raw spirits unable to find a vent.

Some dressed in their best clothes, sang songs of glee, and appeared as merry as if this awful moment had been the most auspicious of their lives. Many again were lying past all reason on the deck, the exterior of their persons as thoroughly drenched in the spirit that plashed around them, as the

coats of their bodies within, while guns dismounted, and even the corpses of some who had crawled below and expired on their road to the surgeon, added to the horrors of the place.

“Holloa, messmate! holloa, what cheer?” said one of the inebriated men, kicking the prostrate body of a fellow-sailor—“Why don’t ye answer?—as dumb as a mummy, you rascal!” and he commenced singing,

“Meanwhile to your health, my ould hearty, in gin,
A * * fine sight this, cried Brien O’Lynn!”

“Speak up, you drunken swab! and answer to your call, or I’ll broil ye, I will—I’ll make ye into a dish of bubblin squeak—snap dragon—I will—What! you won’t answer?—Then here goes,” saying which he ignited some rum in a saucer, and then flung it over the person of the other, mumbling with the coolness of a philosopher who tries some heartless experiment, “You’ll make a * * fine grill, old chap!”

The warm spirit inflaming that contained in the sodden clothes, the blue flame spread with astonishing rapidity, communicating instantaneously with the rest swimming around, until, to complete this floating Troy, an undulating sea of

azure flame welled from side to side with every roll of the vessel, and cries such as the damned alone might be supposed to utter ascended to an offended Heaven.

Signs of great electricity in the atmosphere again began to be manifest; though not as yet so decided as those of the preceding night. The prophesied tornado now came on in reality, and while the mighty deep yawned beneath them, the heavens above opened its jaws of flame, as if to consume them by the opposite element.

When the prisoner of the poop arrived in the main-top, he found two seamen had forestalled him in his designs.

“ Well, Collins, do you make out any thing on the horizon ? ” said he, addressing his late fellow in captivity.

“ Why, your honour, I scarcely know. Bill and I thought just now in one o’ the flashes, we saw a sail or something hereaway on the weather quarter. If you could just bring that glass to bear on it.”

“ I will,” and the prisoner unslinging the telescope fixed it so as to look in the direction required.

“ D’ye see her, sir ?”

“ No, it’s too dark, beside the roll”——

“ Ah ! wait a moment, your honour, you’ll have a flash presently.” Scarcely had these words passed the seaman’s lips, when the heavens seemed to glow one sheet of fire. An exclamation of surprise burst from the men as this livid glare dazzled their eyes, when Collins sang out—

“ Hold fast,—here we go ! God have mercy on us !”

“ What !”—exclaimed the prisoner,—but there was little need to ask an explanation, the lightning had struck the wounded mast, it trembled—toppled—and finally giving way, was, in the next instant, buried in the foam to leeward ; bearing with it the prisoner and Collins, the third seaman having hastily seized on one of the topmast backstays and dropped himself in-board.

Desperate as was the situation of these two, nature impelled them to delay the final moment as long as might be. Still, therefore, did they retain their hold, and getting astride on the mast, lash their bodies to the top ; when on looking to the ship, from which they were now severed—the lee rigging having been so much shot as to give way—

they beheld the thin tapering blue flame of the spirits rise above her dark hull, through the hatchways, as well as the ports, of the main-deck, and bending to the blast, flicker away upon the lee. It was not long before the red gleams of ignited pitch became apparent, with their dense black volumes of smoke curling above. Her *hull* was now on fire.

It was a terrific sight, that lonely mass of flame drifting upon the dark tempestuous ocean; a pile of human sacrifice for hundreds of the Almighty's creatures—some guilty as crime can render fallen man, others innocent and pure as mortality will permit; and one—that one!—as fair, as bright a sacrifice as ever idolatry could offer.

Short was the time it had to blaze, deprived of its masts, the remaining one having quickly followed its predecessor, the old hulk no longer possessing head-way, it broached-to, and fell broad-side to the wind into the trough of the sea.—The water inside now mounting rapidly up to her orlop-deck, she became too heavy to mount the waves any longer, when a tremendous billow breaking with all its fury on her deck, the hull fell over upon its side.—A hiss—a shriek of human

agony was heard along the deep, and the dark mass disappeared from the surface of the waters, to plumb its way through the unfathomed tides below!

The flame thus driven from its prey, shot upwards, borne along on the wings of the tempest for a short distance—its purple light soon diminished—quivered—then expired. And all around was night!

CHAPTER XV.

But hark ! the Muse now sounds a softer string,
No more of arms and horrid wars to sing ;
Grace, beauty, wit, with powers transcendent shine,
And purest passion consecrates the line.

AT last, Fairest of readers, after the scenes of horror through which it has been my lot to take thee, it is with joy that I find my history allows me to pursue a more flowery theme. Perhaps to thy gentle spirit some apology is due for having trodden such a path of carnage. If so, with all submission does the humblest of thy bards proceed to tender the same; though he ventures to think that thou canst scarcely frown on him for vindicating the sorrows and sufferings of one of thy own sex. One who though placed by fortune in a humble grade, might by her beauty and worth have reflected honour on the highest sphere.

Who, contemplating the misery to which this helpless young woman was brought by the laws of her country, does not feel the slight tenure on which happiness is held?—"Laws!"—Oh rank hypocrisy!

Freedom is a gift so sacred that we cannot be too energetic in its defence, or too sensitive to the slightest encroachments which its enemies can make. Surely then, at a time when works of fiction alone are read, some commendation should belong to those who expose a system so hateful in itself and so hideous in its results.

But to return, more immediately to thee, Fair Reader, who, however thou mayest feel disinclined to enter into a slavery debate, art yet more nearly and dearly interested in such matters than thou mayest suppose; for ten to one but thou hast a brother—a lover—a cousin—or a friend at least in the service, on whom the galling chain of servitude and oppression is now pressing with bitter force—force, that if thou couldst know one half of it, might well cause thy bright eye to flow with tears, and thy gentle bosom to own those fears and apprehensions which yet more deeply embitter life's cup of gall. Yet, fear not,

there are still a few in existence who dare to drag these pests to light, despite of threats against their persons or calumnies and abuse on their character; and once brought forth to view—thank God and the press! there are thousands, and I hope millions, who can pity the degradations of their fellow creatures, and assist them to triumph over all. However, to recur once more, we are now bid to leave such a harrowing topic, for

“Sweet nature’s oracle—first love—that all
Which Eve hath left her daughters since her fall.”

As far as I now view the matter, it is imperative on all men who, like myself, undertake to chronicle these naval reminiscences, to be especially connected, through means of their nautical characters, with one of the three naval depôts; arsenals, and dock-yards, Chatham, Portsmouth, or Plymouth. Now Chatham is so absolutely filthy, and so crammed with trulls and soldiers,—that it is utterly beneath a muse as *recherché* as mine. Of Portsmouth and Gossy “I sang in my last”; and now, therefore, am fairly driven down channel to Plymouth. So having furbished my memory under the head of “Hamoaze Yarns,” collected

during sundry refittings, payings-off, and re-commissionings between the years of Grace 1800 and 1812, I shall proceed, demanding pardon for any topographical errors of which I may be guilty on the score of an old man's memory; which, for need of the due refreshment, is apt to grow incontinent.

Few, very few, I take it, of my readers have ever visited Plymouth—in my younger days called Plymouth-Dock,—without noticing the high grounds of Mount Edgecumbe, that form the western arm of the sound or bay; being on the right hand side as you look seaward from the land.

Few as can have failed to observe these, the chief beauties of the scene, still fewer I should think have contemplated the endless variety of wood, shade, and pasturage which here crown the Danmonian deep, without gratifying the spontaneous wish to ramble among their picturesque glades and lovely scenery, through the courtesy of the estimable Noble who owns the manor. Amid these “Amaranthine bowers of bliss” it is my delighted lot to roam, hand in hand with the lovely heroines of my tale; and if to the eye of thee, fair Reader, I can only represent them as

they once appeared to me, I need entertain but slight fears of acquitting myself satisfactorily in my undertaking, and affording some trivial pleasure to those who feel that nature's fairest scenes are yet a paradise.

On the brow of one of the hills forming this demesne, the dilapidated remnant of a gothic tower yet uplifts its gray and time-worn arch towards the heavens. Around its base lie scattered the stones which seem formerly to have composed its crumbling walls : on these the ever verdant parasite of ruins luxuriantly blooms, yielding a noble lesson of faithfulness in adversity—even unto death*. But even this humble friend has its enemies, who would seek to annul its attachment, and the stems therefore are carefully fenced about to protect them from the nibbling of the deer,

* I am sorry, dear Reader, to confess myself in the situation of Monkbarns when the Beggar insisted that the Antiquary's Roman encampment was but "a stane dyke, for I mind the biggin' o't."—So the ruined tower in the text is only a modern one, which the good taste of its proprietor built up and pulled down again to form a picturesque object. The gothic arches, the window tracery, mullions, &c. are however, I believe, of true antiquity, being taken from some other part of this ancient estate, so that there still remains a connecting link with the past.

bounding along in scenes of beauty not inferior to their own. Time, who bestows on the objects of an antiquary's reverence the very halo which consecrates a heap of rubbish, has yet no particle of that feeling which his remorseless hand creates. Little, therefore, of this building had survived; but the granite pinnacles, copings, loopholes, and window tracery, breathed, as it were, to the said antiquary's heart a melancholy and pleasing tale; and while his eye wandered over their rough lineaments, the memory pensively reverted to the many beings whose brief span they had survived and whose actions they had witnessed.

Fronting the sea, the petty waves of which chafed on the rocky shore beneath, stood the gable wall, the shafts of whose high gothic window still remained entire, and surmounted the rest of the pile; its northern angle yet displaying an arched buttress, with octagonal stone spire.—Within this window was a platform, where stood a young man of singular appearance, eying with feelings of devotion the beauteous scene before him. His figure was slight rather than powerful, but the symmetry that was apparent to a close observer, bespoke it capable of great exertion and

activity. His height was above that of the generality of his sex, but owing to the just proportions of his limbs, it was only observable by juxtaposition. He wore on his head a deep-blue velvet cap, bound with gold lace, the large leathern front of which, denoted it to be of foreign manufacture.

From beneath this escaped the dark hair, curling and waving in the morning breeze. His features appeared to have long been exposed to the action of the sun; they were small and marked. The eye was large and quick, but chiefly remarkable for the singular searching expression which seemed to dwell in its glance. The lips were full and sharply cut; on the upper one was a thin dark moustache. He wore no whiskers to increase the rather small size of his face, which, however, was rendered less apparent by the rounded chin and neck, displayed through the sailor's open collar and negligée handkerchief. The upper part of the countenance expressed a careless good-natured candour, but around the lips there might have been traced a strange wayward expression of reserve, as if the smile one would have expected to find there, had in its rise

from the heart been arrested by experience, and converted into a repelling and sarcastic sneer. When he spoke, which he frequently did, to himself, his better nature triumphed, and the first intuitive feeling pervaded his whole countenance; but suddenly as some unwelcome or self-reproving thought passed through his mind, the dark arched brows contracted, the bright hazel eye seemed to lose its oblong for a more globular form, while the lip and nostril curled with disdain. In an instant, all was tranquil as before, and melancholy—the melancholy of reflection—assumed the place of both smile and frown. These changes were but a short epitome of his character; since a very slight acquaintance proved the last to contain that which we might love—dread—and compassionate. For the rest of his dress it consisted of a double-breasted jacket of blue cloth, the collar being turned over, a pair of very white duck trowsers, and low shoes, with gold buckles.

A black canvass band crossed his back diagonally, and suspended a small narrow bag, whose office was to hold the spy-glass, on which rested the hand of its owner. Beside his countenance, there was but one ornament that bespoke his rank

to be gentle, this was a Turkish scimitar, apparently too large to be wielded by so slight a hand. Skill is, however, at any time preferable to strength, and whenever that hand—by accident or otherwise—came in contact with the hilt, it was with that careless grace which bespeaks a long familiarity—a familiarity that for his years one would not have expected, no, nor wished to see. Nor was the weapon itself calculated to lessen the surprise which the stranger excited. A diamond of considerable value glittered at that point where the blade is riveted to the crown of the handle, the sheathing and ornamental parts of the latter, as well as of the scabbard, being gold, while it hung from his slight waist by small chains of the same precious metal.

A sigh escaped him and some faint exclamation, as his eye wandered over the noble bay stretched before him, its rippled surface reflecting the light clear blue of the firmament above, and breaking gently on the base of Stadden heights, whose mountains formed the opposite arm of the sound at some five miles' distance. Of the mighty, fleet which had ridden there at anchor some few days since, one frigate was all that now remained,

rising over the long gradual swell of waters borne in from the channel; each heaving on its huge breast a hundred smaller waves, as if the mere rufflings of the partial and dying breeze.

Suddenly some specks like men appeared to rise and move about in her taunt black rigging—the stranger applied his glass to his eye. After an interval of a few minutes, a very long dark object seemed rapidly ascending to the top of each mast—simultaneously their careers were checked—when, lo! before the landsman's eye could distinguish their purpose, three additional yards appeared, as if by magic, to have assumed their stations at the respective cross-trees of each top-mast, while a musket flashed forth from either side of the deck; their report across the sea being accompanied by the sound of eight strokes of the ship's bell and the long-winded call of the boatswain's mate, which summoned her crew to breakfast on cocoa and biscuit. After a few minutes' inspection, the stranger withdrew his glass to contemplate the rest of the scene.

Immediately beneath him, the swelling brow of the hill sloped down to meet the sea, gradually exchanging its rich verdure for a browner tint,

the latter giving way to barrenness, until a low irregular wooden paling marked the boundary where cultivation ceased and nature assumed her reign over the black rugged rocks beneath. On these the waters softly murmured. Iron-bound as this demesne is, the little bay which we are now describing was comparatively an easy landing-place. It was formed by two promontories of the hill where stood the ruined tower crowning the height. From the nearest or left hand point ran out a line of rocks towards the small island of St. Nicholas, situated nearly in the middle of the Sound. This reef, never visible to the eye, and only to be noticed by the ripple on the surface at low tide, is denominated "The Bridge," and effectually bars the passage over into the Sound, save for ships of small burden—those of a larger class being obliged to pursue the safe but circuitous passage between St. Nicholas and the main land; passing into the bay by the deeper waters of the opposite side under Stadden Heights. The last warm morning sun of June was throwing its delicious and exhilarating light around the landscape, glancing from the blue tides of the bay on the rich yellow intermingled with black

that variegated the precipitous sides of St. Nicholas, and resting on its fortified height, where the ensign of Old England floated proudly on the breeze. Extending in a direct line from this, the observer's glance was arrested by the dark heavy citadel that frowned over Catwater from its elevated site upon the Hoe. Beyond, again, the sun's beams were reflected back by the white dwellings which skirted the town of Plymouth, whose borough remained hid in the valley. Extending from this point towards the west, succeeded a line of rocks, forming occasional bays and headlands for the extent of four miles, until it terminated in an abrupt point. Beneath the last, on a line of low rocks, sprinkled by the foam, was built a small octagon tower of some antiquity, originally erected to defend the entrance to Hamoaze; for which purpose a chain had formerly extended across the strait to Mount-Edgumbe. Through this narrow passage passed the waters of the river, and its tributary streams; as well as the flow of that ocean which engulfed them all.

Having once stemmed the pent-up tide that rushed along this outlet, the mariner entered a capacious harbour, capable of containing an im-

mense fleet, while in its more hidden recesses were stored in ordinary, a great proportion of those noble vessels, which exceeded even the large demand of that day.

From the commanding situation on which the stranger stood, he beheld the groups of masts that arose from the bosom of this haven, teeming with life, the gigantic sheds whose hundred windows gave light to the workmen building ships within, the men-of-war, some riding all-a-taunto, only waiting a few hours to go forth to victory ; others half dismantled, their crews busy in the work of refitment, while conspicuous for size, neatness, and imposing appearance, swung the two guardships, their checquered sides bristling with the implements of death, and throwing their image on the mirror below with all the vanity of an inanimate Narcissus.

Commanding this, were seen the batteries of Mount Wise, from behind which glinted forth once more the sheen of the town, long the admiration of Jack Tar under the denomination of Plymouth Dock : the gorgeous whole being surrounded in the distance by the light blue mountains of Dartmoor, whose tors were now dimly revealed

through a hazy mantle of azure, which rolled from off the inclosed scene, seemed to hang suspended on them from heaven, like the gossamer veil of Beauty, flung aside to delight us with a more perfect view of her lovely features.

Nature, though delightful at all times, is never so much admired as by those on whom affliction has pressed, or wrong has driven forth to stand apart from their fellow creatures, while the thousand springs of affection with which a sensitive and passionate heart overflows, is left to stagnate into gall. The stranger gazed stedfastly upon the heavenly view that opened before him, and as its kindly influence crept over him, he felt the many wounds with which his bosom bled, close their dumb mouths, as if the fragrant dew that floated round him could have sunk upon them like a balm. The soft and gentle passages of his life, fondly cherished, seemed to rise upon him. His perturbed spirits calmed, as with an opiate. Man was not near to excite those baleful passions which bring such guilt and misery in their rear. Nature only spoke of her Creator, while the "still small voice" proclaimed that this lull was such as virtue loved.

“Why does not life end now?” murmured the stranger—“Why am I to be forced once more into that arena of contention, that chaos of passion, and urged to deeds which may endanger my self-esteem—endanger the calm pure bliss of this moment? Why have I not strength of mind to renounce it?—Oh that ‘life’s poor play were o’er!’”

As this exclamation escaped him, his eye, in which some trace of “woman’s weakness” was visible, turned towards the open sea. As he contemplated the mighty masses far away, tumbling in useless wrath, his spirit seemed to catch the feelings of strife once more. His lips no longer quivered as with the softer emotions of the soul, but assumed a stern and haughty expression of defiance, the before drooping eye-lid no longer softened the glance that now shot forth from beneath, but the rigid nostril and resolute cast which his features had suddenly assumed, denoted how opposite the change which had taken place.

“Relent!—I will not relent!” he exclaimed, energetically striking his hand upon the hilt of his scimitar. “No, I will strike them home—aye! even to the last. Silent and slow, but not the less secure. I will be above this weakness. What

should mortality be to me—except my plaything? Let me be steeled—insensible to the emotions which distract others, and far above them all,” extending his arm, while pride and pleasure glowed in his eyes and played in the gratified sarcastic smiles that dimpled round his mouth. Scarcely had these resolves passed through his mind, when another change became visible in his variable countenance. Admiration and curiosity succeeded, as his eye caught some interesting object beneath him, to the right. It was of short duration—pettishly turning his head away,—“Psha! What am I so soon to be tempted from my purpose? Why should I remember that there are such fair forms in this ——.” The rest was lost as he endeavoured to resume his former thoughts, though—it may be feared—in vain.

The objects which had possessed sufficient attraction thus to disturb him, consisted of three figures now issuing forth from the dark grove of pines which clothed the hill to the right. The light tints of their dresses were distinctly visible as they advanced among the tall graceful boles of the trees; the light-hearted laugh that broke from one of them, being echoed among the hollows of

the wood, and startling the young antelopes from the tender herbage to bound along the hill, their white tynes glancing in the sun-beams.

The trio consisted of two ladies and a gentleman. From one of the former it was that the sounds of merriment proceeded, as she alternately danced and skipped around the other two—now seizing the vacant arm of the gentleman, now as suddenly leaving it to snatch a flower—to chase a butterfly, or vainly endeavour to catch one of the young deer that skipped past her in a mood no less frolicsome than her own. The latter amusement, as being the most futile, seemed to suit her best.

The other lady appeared pensive and silent, admiring the beautiful moss-rose just presented to her by a pretty rustic, who aspired to the high honours of being her waiting-maid, the daughter of one of the gamekeepers residing in an ornamented cottage within the wood.

“Come Chatty, girl, the number of your mess is called, it’s past eight bells,” said the gentleman turning round and addressing the trifler with much good nature. “They’re not such greenhorns as to let you come alongside of them.”

“No, the ill-natured things, they won’t, and

yet it's very hard they shouldn't come to me! I've seen them come to Margiée there, I have"—tripping forward to bestow on her fair rival a stroke with the light birch-spray which she had pulled in her walk. Her companions had now cleared the wood. Suddenly arresting her flight as she looked up to the tower—"Why there's a man, I declare!—and he's quite handsome, too—Look!"—

"Holloa! save us!" rejoined the gentleman, "whom have we got here?—with his cat's whiskers rigged over his mouth—Some French son of a gun, I'll bet a day's pay!—Come, Chatty! let's go up and make his number—A rum figure-head he's got—some curled spy of that rascal Master Boney's—but he never would have the impudence to come *here*! Bear a hand, Girls! and clap on more sail; he doesn't see us—we'll have time to work up to windward of this hill, and get the weather gage of Johnny Crappo before he can make off. We must overhaul his commission for him. Clap on more canvass, Girls, clap on!" But these urgent entreaties were little needed, at least by that one of the party designated "Chatty," who stimulated by curiosity and the little she had observed, was as eager for a close inspection as her companion, and already

in her own mind pronounced this the most pleasant object with which she had met during her morning ramble. Outstripping the other two, therefore, she was already on the point of reaching the steps of the ruin and rushing up with her accustomed wildness, when the suppressed voice of the gentleman delayed her, saying, "'Vast heaving there, you little vixen! Shorten sail and drop under my lee! d'ye think he's going to hoist his colours to such a light craft as you? Here, give us your arm—now then, we have him—Senior officer's place to hail such a—Well, he's a tight-built fellow too—for a Frenchman.—Now I say"—stopping short and pointing out the object of admiration to the ladies—"that fellow's put together like a reg'lar built sailor—fine bit of stuff, I know—no look of a dancing master there—how devilish still he is!—Come let's fill and make sail," and with measured steps they quietly ascended the stairs until reaching the platform, where they halted to take breath.

"Togg'd out to the nines, by Jove!" was the gentleman's involuntary and indistinct exclamation, as he beheld the splendid sword-belt. While they were mutely gazing in astonishment, the stranger, who appeared too deeply wrapt in his

own ideas to be aware of their presence, extending his hand towards the Sound, ejaculated—"Yes, this scene is most superb!" Then, suddenly turning round, he confronted his inspectors, whom it is high time that we should describe. To begin then with the ladies, to whom courtesy as well as feeling dictates that I should pay the first attention. A first glance discovered great similarity in age and figure. Seventeen years would have been generally considered the amount of the former, while the latter would have been pronounced to be slightly above the usual height of their sex. Correct as these surmises would have been in their general outline there were yet a few minute differences visible in these fair works of creation.

The eldest of the twins—for such they were—was named Charlotte, abbreviated by her father into Chatty—was distinguished in figure from her sister by the merest difference of height, in which the youngest had the advantage, as well as by the more voluptuous fulness that was visible throughout her form—their countenances presented almost as great a contrast as their characters. The contour of Charlotte's face was round—her complex-

ion of a rich brunette which might have been termed dark, but for the full black eye that glowed with all the liquid fires of youth and wit. Her features were all delicately formed, but yet strongly marked. Her nose was Roman, and bespoke a slight masculine tinge of character; her lips were wreathed with eternal smiles, while laughter served to display the additional beauty of her teeth. The crimsoned bloom of health and joy mantled on her cheek, relieved yet deepened by the jetty hair that wantoned around it—straying from a high and open forehead where all the candour and generosity of her disposition might be traced at sight. There she stood, a dazzling creature, before whom had a poet, a painter, and a sculptor passed, they would each have confirmed the judgment of the former, and pronounced her to be a—*beauty*. Far different was her younger sister, Margarita, whom her uncle had so named, as the pearl of the sea, on which element she chanced to be born during her father's service afloat.

Her name, like her sister's, had been abbreviated by her parent, that enemy to long words—and the only share of her rightful cognomen which

she ever received, was "Margiéc." Though it might not be so appropriate, it was at least a more emphatical designation than that of Chatty.

I have already said that Margiée was in a very trifling degree taller than her sister, as also that she appeared more slightly and delicately made. Not that her figure was at all wanting in those rounded lines which comprise the chief beauty in the human form—far otherwise: grace was in every movement. Nor was there any point where the most fastidious eye could have suggested any improvement that would not have deranged the symmetry of the whole. The differences in their figures were just sufficient to pronounce the one elegant and dignified, the other voluptuous. The same character extended to the countenance, which presented a small oval. So purely fair were the hues on her delicate features, that they might have been ascribed to indisposition, but for the clear transparency that put such a thought to instant flight, and the exquisitely soft eye which beamed through its long lashes over snowy lids that drooping, seemed to hide the orbs within, but in reality imparted a sleepy expression of such heavenly softness, that he who gazed

started, to ask himself if mortality could claim the parentage of aught so worthy of the skies. The pupil within was of the brightest shade of hazel—the surrounding orb tinged with azure; and sure never hazel beamed with so much soul before. Her nose was purely of a Grecian mould. Her lips were like her sister's, full and distinctly formed; but in the place of Chatty's smiles, a vague melancholy feeling seemed to reveal itself, that agreed far better with the meditative cast of her features, and heightened the interest of the observer. Nor were the pearly rows beneath displayed by mirth—the latter would have been deemed a sentiment too low ever to be associated with the gentle seraph before you. No: they were only seen as those bright red lips moved obedient to the romantic, but sound and tempered fancy of their mistress—as compassion raised them, or surprise divided. Her neck and chin Sappho might have envied. Nor could Ovid from among all his heroines have produced one lock to out-shine the dark glossy curls that exuberantly flowed over her neck and shoulders.

Placed beside her sister, the judges that would have pronounced Charlotte a perfect specimen of

beauty, could not but have confessed that Margarita was a model of Patrician *loveliness*. The first would have excited the surprise, the admiration of man—how such a noble creature could be formed in such a world—might have drawn forth the exclamation of Shakspeare, beginning with—

“ Now dances my rapt heart, thou noble thing ! ”

But the triumph of the latter, however delayed for an instant, would have been sure; and the most obdurate heart must have bowed before her fascination. Awed by her native grace and dignity, and involuntarily attracted by her elegance and softness, the beholder would have regarded her as a being of a purer sphere, too ethereal in her nature ever to be sullied by contact with the children of earth, and fit only to be enshrined as a gem*.—

* Should any of my Readers feel the slightest curiosity to behold the likeness of this exquisite original, they may at once be gratified by turning to the illustrations of the *Waverley* novels, where, in the portrait designed for Flora Mac-Ivor, they will find a most singular and striking picture of Margarita Salisbury. The eyebrows in the print are scarcely enough arched, and the expression of the mouth is a little too cold and haughty; but in other respects it presents a strange and faithful resemblance. On the other hand, it does not at all embody the idea I had always formed of Fergus's sister. It appears to me to be too young, too femininely beautiful, too expressly formed for the tender endearments of love, to represent the resolute and

The former would have had many suitors and servants, the latter worshippers and slaves.

The gentleman in the centre, upon whose arms these fair girls now leaned, was not altogether unworthy of the relation in which he stood to them—that of a father. In his tall and portly figure the stock from whence they sprang was readily discerned, while the manly bearing of a sailor was visible in his ruddy weather-beaten countenance.

Rarely is it the lot of man to preserve in the decline of life such perfect remains of the bloom of youth. Few who gazed upon the high aquiline nose and untamed dark eye of this individual, would have given him credit for the store of years which had shed their honours on his head. Even here they had forborne their devastating power,

exalted female sketched by Scott, whose admirations and affections were engrossed by the memory of a departed hero. It is certainly the master-piece of Chalon—at least I have seen nothing of his to compare to it—it is truly lovely. The rest of the illustrations are “poor indeed.” There are some odours too delicate for distillation. So the creations of the brain are too ethereal to be thus materialized. We never have possessed an artist, if we except Martin, who has been able to realize the conceptions inspired by the poetry of description. But Martin’s pictures are indeed the splendid productions of a noble imagination, presenting scenes which we had often fancied, but never before beheld.

and though the deep hues of a former day had now paled to a gold flaxen shade, the thinned locks curled around his honest and laurelled temples as gracefully as ever. He wore a round glazed hat; and it is saying sufficient of his good looks to remark, that even this frightful piece of our stiff national costume was not sufficient to mar them. His hands, kept with the most scrupulous neatness, but bearing honourable testimony of his profession, were crossed on his expansive chest, while the elbows were at the service of his children. A great coat of blue cloth, with plain buttons, entirely concealed every other part of his dress, except the stiff boots of black leather, which extended without wrinkle to his well-formed knee, while from their tops depended two tassels. His countenance seemed to blend the different dispositions of his daughters, and while all the fun and good-nature of Chatty sparkled round his mouth, the dignity and good-breeding of Margarita were apparent in his eyes and forehead.

Such was Sir Richard Salisbury, who must now be introduced to the Reader as the PORT ADMIRAL of Plymouth.

To revert to that moment of our history when the stranger first beheld the trio, after his exclamatory praise of the scene before him. The old officer no sooner heard his native language, than he internally said, "That's right, my jolly boy! I thought he couldn't be a Frenchman; too ship-shape in his build," and stepping towards the other with a frankness of air that more than compensated for his former suspicions, he added, "You are an admirer of the picturesque, Sir, I perceive?"

"Of every thing that is beautiful," returned the stranger, bowing slightly and glancing with a look of significant meaning at the ladies. Charlotte smiled, and received the compliment like one who accepts what is due, while Margarita barely indulged her female curiosity with a look in return, when her eyes sought the ground in evident confusion, and she slowly turned away her head.

"An admirer of every thing that is beautiful?" replied Charlotte. "Indeed! then of course you admire me?"

"Charlotte! how can you, to a perfect stranger?" interrupted Margiée, in a low voice, seizing her

sister's arm from behind, while the Admiral chuckled with much good-nature at this extraordinary sally. There was something so full of fun in the black eye of her who put this home question, that it was impossible for any one to mistake its meaning, much less one so versed in the many readings of the female character as the stranger.

Bowing, therefore to Margiée, who seemed apprehensive of the construction he might put on her sister's question, he returned, "Truly, while another lady is present, and one so very fair, I dare not reply in an affirmative that would relate exclusively to yourself. Nevertheless, Ladies, if either of you have by accident ever beheld a mirror, you can forestall my answer. The more so, as I—vainly perhaps—pretend to some little taste in these matters."

"Oh indeed!—The very person I have wanted to meet for an age. Come, you shall be a second Paris, and tell me who is the prettiest—I or my sister?" pulling the latter forward.—"Come Margiée, come to be judged!"—But the latter took shelter behind her father.—"Ah bashful Margiée! that's not fair.—Sir Stranger! you can't see her features."

“ Thank you, my fair Juno, but I have already had that pleasure; and slight as was the glimpse of your lovely Minerva, they are not easily to be forgotten.”

“ Harkye there, Margiée! Hear that, he calls you Minerva and me Juno, but neither of us, it seems, are sufficiently beautiful for a Venus. What a false knight, Margiée! Let us be revenged on him, such a recreant!—and leave him and Bunting Main together.”

“ Nay, that would indeed be cruel. I must humbly sue for your forgiveness; for though you may not admire my decision as a judge, you must commend my prudence as a mortal. With the example of Paris before my eyes, could I be so rash as to create jealousy between two goddesses of such superior charms, and thus draw down on my luckless head the enmity of the rejected. You cannot contemplate such an atrocity at my hands. Believe me, you are both too dazzling for the weak eyes of mortals.”

“ Right well defended, my Preux Chevalier! You talk well and feelingly—how is it that—perhaps you speak from experience—Hah!—you are silent? No, you sigh—well, that may discourse

as 'much excellent music,' as a louder tone. However, Sir Knight of the Velvet Bonnet, I see you give the preference to Margiée."

"Truly, my bright and unknown Deity——

"Well never mind, I am not to be daunted. I like your wit very much—I must have you on *my* side. I think if I were to know much more of you, I should make strong love to you;" then assuming a coaxing tone and attitude, she continued, laying her little birch spray on his arm and looking up into his face, "Now do tell me, that's a good creature, *who are you?*"

The stranger started, his eye became distended slightly, and in the glow which animated his cheek, as well as the doubtful sneer that played around his mouth, one might have discovered some feeling of anger. It was however but evanescent, when seeming to wander once more into the maze of his own thoughts, he turned silently towards the sea, and sighed in the suppressed manner of one who unwillingly recalls the dreams and deeds of bygone years.

The Port Admiral had hitherto stood looking on with all the pride and delight of a fond parent, shaking his sleek sides with merriment at

the exhibition of those sallies which he was accustomed so often to behold. Here, however, he was afraid that his daughter had touched an untuned string. Checking her arm therefore, as it hung in his, he said, "'Vast heaving, Chatty, there! that red rag of thine is like a frigate in a convoy, always a-head."

"Come, Bunting-main, none of those horrid sea similes of yours. They're as bad in their way as the prudery of my pretty quak'ress-like sister, Margiée."

"And for thee my friend, Chatty, I fear thou art too fond of the French coquetterie."

"Do you not esteem this unusually fine weather for Devonshire?" inquired the stranger, after a slight pause, without noticing the question which had been put to him.

"No," replied the old Admiral, "we have a very good time of it here generally at this season of the year."

"I had understood you were always deluged with rain."

"Aye, aye, we have a mess of that too, now and then, thanks to the snivelling old son of a gun, St. Swithin."

"Come, Bunting-main, spare us those hard

names, and tell us if such a day was not made to be passed on the water?" advancing to the ruined window where stood the stranger.

"Yes, Chatty, this is fine weather for fresh water sailors."

"What say you, sister Margiée? Should you like a sail?"

"I should have no objections," returned Margarita, in the still and quiet manner so peculiarly her own.

The stranger remained a mute observer, and seemed to watch each movement of the last speaker's lips, as if their tones were to him a rich and cherished melody.

"Stopper there, my girls," said the Admiral. "All this may seem to you plain sailing, but could you tell me how you intend to go?"

"Why, to be sure you'll lend us your tender," and Charlotte threw her arms round her father's neck in the manner of young ladies who intend to take no denial.

"My tender has gone round to Portsmouth with the fleet, Darling."

"How provoking! Then you'll get us the commissioner's."

“ Can’t, Chatty, she’s alongside the sheer-hulk getting her mast out.”

“ And is there nothing in the harbour that you can give us?”

“ Not even a ketch. My boats are painting. So you’ve both tide and wind against you: unless you like to have that frigate lying off there—the Voleur. She shall trip round Cawsand with you. Dandy Fred, as you call him, will be happy enough, I dare say.”

As this conversation passed, the stranger looked up, wondering to himself who this open hearted and unpretending old officer could be, endowed seemingly with such authority.

“ No, no,” pettishly returned Charlotte, with all the good-nature which a spoiled child can possess—“ I won’t have the Voleur—I don’t like that puppy the Honourable Captain Dunderhead—he always makes such open love to me. Not that the last is so unpleasant,” looking archly towards the stranger, “ except when it comes from so unmanly a fop as Dunderhead. What do you think that creature does to his ropes, papa?”

“ What, girl?”

“ Why he actually scents them with *eau de*

Cologne!—No, no, I had rather remain at home than do him such an honour—with his conceit. He always keeps us to himself whenever we go on board—never lets any of the other officers come near us—and there are several much more pleasant than himself.”

“ Ay, ay, Chatty, he’s up to trap—he’s afraid they’ll cut him out.”

“ So that handsome, impudent Claristowe said, who is third lieutenant on board. And now I think of it, Margiée—oh what fun it will be!—let us take the day’s trip in-her—I’ll flirt with Claristowe, and you with Littelle (the junior lieutenant); and then the honourable coxcomb will be left all to himself. Yes, yes, we will!—oh I shall be delighted!” and she clapped her little hands in joyous anticipation of her admirer’s chagrin.

Margarita however did not seem to enter into this proposal with the same glee, but smiling faintly, as if at her sister’s vagaries, replied. “ Not so, Chatty, for me. You can indulge yourself. The fondness for flirtation, as thou callest it, seems happily confined to one branch of the family. I cannot see any delight in being stared at by so many officers.”

“Pooh, Child! that is thy want of spirit. You should think that *you* are looking at *them*—not *they* at *you*. But do let us go, Margiée. Remember, we shall not be alone: we can take off the whole crew at home. And then think what fun to leave Captain Dunderhead taking care of our sage aunt, Lady Sapphira! Oh it will be capital! Now do, Margiée. I long to set those two by the ears!”

But Margarita only shook her head in a manner that forbade the entertainment of such an idea.

“Look at her, Papa, the ill natured prude—positively ill natured. So I suppose I am to give up such a beautiful day, because I’ve a sister fit for a Quakeress or a nun!”

CHAPTER XVI.

“ Oh Love, in such a wilderness as this,
Where transport and where solitude combine,
Here are indeed thy perfect bowers of bliss,
And here thou art indeed a god divine.”

CAMPBELL.

IN this dilemma Charlotte stood regarding the sea, somewhat chagrined at having her plans thwarted by scruples whose existence she could not understand.

The point already mentioned as being the one from which the ridge of rocks ran out, was on the left of the tower, and as Charlotte's eye rested on the wild pine-trees that grew on the edge, and stretched their shaggy arms down into the gulf below, she discerned through the openings of their stems the dark hull of some small vessel.

The last mentioned object was riding by a single

anchor, and in a few minutes a slight cat's-paw made her drag her cable veering into another position and coming distinctly into view.

Her hull now appeared to be long and low, rising gradually out of the water towards the bow, the monotony of the dark grey colour with which she was painted being only relieved by a very narrow ribbon of red paint. This however was scarcely visible at this distance. A small boat was floated secured to her stern, and the only signs of life visible on board were those displayed by a huge sailor, that like a mountain of humanity walked the quarter-deck, and in defiance of June flapped his huge arms in the manner of those who wish to impart to their blood additional warmth and circulation. In the middle of this little vessel's deck were stowed two boats of a larger size than the one astern, and perched on the former was a very large black dog, seemingly meditating on the scene around him with philosophic gravity. Three taunt masts of Norwegian red pine rose from her deck, raking aft to such an extreme degree that the unaccustomed eye almost apprehended their immediate fall—they moreover bespoke a character foreign to the English navy at that

period, and indeed but too little adopted since. As Charlotte contemplated this little vessel, its extreme beauty struck even *her* fancy, and while she admired the degree of exactitude, order, and neatness visible in all its parts, the idea of its serving her present need came across her mind as she pointed it out to her father, saying,

“ See Papa, that vessel will do for me—we’ll have that. What a delightful little cruiser she appears to be !” but the Port Admiral had already descried her low form as it rode over the scarcely ruffled surface with all the native grace of a sea bird, and was now puzzling himself to discover what she was.

“ Why, Chatty, as to that, hang me if I know—The fellow has no pendant flying—and yet—why she can hardly be any thing else but a King’s craft. Whoever commands her keeps her gear in its place—yards square—lifts, stays, braces—all taut—masts well set up too—a devil of a rake the fellow’s got, though! Almost as bad as a Yankee. But it can’t be an American, one would as soon expect to see Boneyparty here as Jonathan. How low she sits in the water, too!—she sails well, I know—A regular clipper—a day’s pay for it she is.—

I must have a closer squint at her. Sir, will you favour me with your glass for a few minutes?" addressing the stranger, and as the latter complied with this request, Margarita observed a latent smile on his features which excited a correspondent one on her own. Hers was of pleasure to see that the being before her was not so inaccessible to the softer emotions of the soul as the occasional coldness of his looks expressed—his had its origin in a different feeling.

As the Admiral turned his glass towards the object of his curiosity, the rest of the party waited in silence to hear the results of his examination. "Devilish snug!" muttered the Admiral, "devilish snug! Not a soul to be seen aboard of her except one thumping fellow that reminds me of Nat's yarns of Polyphemus—he's got an overhand hitch in his eye-brows, and looks savage enough to eat a boat's crew roasted on a studding-sail boom, as the other one-eyed ogre served Ulysses.—Yes, there's a dog just fit to be tender to such a sheer-hulk. He's as black as a negro. One would think he was mate of the watch, to see him up there on the boats, keeping a look out fore and aft. Well, Chatty, I can't see any thing about her like a

King's ship—neither pennant, ensign, nor uniform. She's a touch above me; I'm afraid she won't answer to my hail. If her skipper's a King's man, he must have a plaguy sight of impudence never to have come and reported himself, unless he came too late last night. Thank you for your glass, sir—I don't make her out."

The stranger received his telescope, and bowing, turned towards Margarita,—“ Surely, Ladies, let the commander be who he may—whatever government he may serve,—he cannot at least disown his allegiance to youth and beauty. To two *such* applicants how could he give a refusal, even though the demand extended to one half of his kingdom?"

“ Bravo! Sir Stranger, that is well said. Margicé, what think you?—But tell me, how are we to get access to that burly chief yonder, beating his huge body about, seeing that we have no boat. I think, sir, you must undertake the part of a dolphin, and transport your goddesses thither on your back."

“ Good! my Fair Juno; but before we proceed any further, with what are you prepared to propitiate that savage, her captain, since, like all rude

chiefs, he doubtless requires to be won over by some well-timed present?"

"Oh the mercenary wretch! and I've come out without any ornaments," looking at her plainly, but tastefully, attired person—"even a ring, and so has Margiée—we don't often wear those things."

"Nor require them," interrupted the stranger. Charlotte smiled, and proceeded,—

"Now is not this provoking? I'll give him—what should I give?—why, if I thought he'd estimate it any worth, I'd present him with my hand to salute."

"And would you bestow a boon of the same price?" asked the stranger, in a seemingly careless tone, of Margarita.

"Why—I think—I might. Eh! Papa?"

"Aye, aye, girl, half a dozen for the matter of that."

"Then they are due to me," suddenly exclaimed the stranger, seizing a hand from each lady, but pressing them gently and respectfully to his lips. "I am that burly savage chief who commands that schooner, and never has the office conferred upon me such honour and pleasure as at this moment."

Margarita bent her head and snatched away her hand, while Charlotte laughingly said, "What slyness in your wit, my friend!" allowing him to retain the taper fingers that invited admiration.

"Fairly won, by Jove!—fairly won, even if it had been the cheek. Ha, ha, ha! You weren't wide awake; you should have bargained for the cheek—kissing hands is fal-lal stuff."

"Come, Bunting-main, don't be rude," and his beautiful daughter patted him on the chin with that affectionate familiarity which speaks so truly of domestic happiness.

"Come, come, Captain ——?"—resumed Charlotte, and then pausing for him to fill up the space with his name.

"Croiser," he returned, bending gracefully towards his interrogator.

"Well then, Captain Croiser, since we have paid the forfeit, it is but fair that you should perform your part of the agreement. What say you?"

"That I shall be most happy. My little bark, Ladies, as well as her unworthy commander, are both at your service. You have but to name the

hour when you would like to embark, and I will immediately go off and have her in readiness."

"Thank ye, my dear sir,—it's devilish kind in you. The girls here will be delighted to accept your offer of the craft, but you mustn't be off like a shot. Can't you hail for a boat, and get that Polyphemus ashore, to give your orders, and then you can 'bout ship and take a bit of breakfast with the girls while they get rigg'd?"

The stranger's eye brightened, he looked at his vessel and then at Charlotte—hesitated—turned towards Margarita, and then accepted the invitation as cordially as it was given. This point being arranged, they descended from the ruin, and Captain Croiser, walking hastily down to the point near which the vessel was lying, immediately hailed her, and desired the Man-mountain to come ashore.

The Port Admiral and his daughters remained standing on the brow above, and, as the deep clear sounds of the commander's voice struck on their ear, an exclamation of surprise burst from all three, so different did they seem to the low gentle tones which appeared habitual to his conversation.

“ I wonder who that fellow can be ? ” muttered the Admiral to himself. “ A rum name ‘ *Croiser* ! ’ —don’t like it—too Frenchified—a smart officer though—looks like a king’s man—They don’t get that cut out of the navy—none of your merchant service—free trader—aye, or ‘ honourable company’s lead ’ about him—all right and tight—a clipping craft he’s got too, by Jove!—a young fellow—good voice for hailing a top in a South-easter.—Well, girls, what dy’e think of him, eh Chatty ? ”

“ ‘ Think of him ? ’ —he’s charming. What say you, Margiée.”

“ I have seen nothing from which to judge, Charlotte—but we know thou art readily charmed and art able to bear the spells of more than one exorcist at once.”

“ Ah, Prudence ! I know you,—you wish to have him all to yourself—but you shan’t,” brushing her younger sister’s face with the birch-spray. A deep glow seeming to spread over her delicate countenance as she disclaimed the truth of this assertion.

“ Now, then, Sir, I shall be most happy to accompany you,” said the stranger, joining them.

“ I have spoken to my burly second in command, and he will warp the schooner into Barn Pool as you requested, where she will be ready for us to go on board within half an hour’s time.”

“ Thank ye, Captain Croiser. I hope this freak of Chatty’s has not interrupted any more serious duty in which your privateer ought to be employed.”

Taking no notice of this assumption as to the character of his vessel, her commander merely replied, that “ a true knight can have no duty which he performs with so much pleasure as that of attendance on beauty,” and offered his arm to Charlotte, but not without a glance directed towards the graceful and retiring Margarita, who remained close to her father, leading the way up the hill which gradually rose above the site of the ruined tower, until the distant summit of its rising ground was only recognized in the large dark wood by which it was crowned.

They now pursued a path cut midway, following the sweep of the ground, which on both sides was devoted to pasturage. Large patches of luxuriant fern, slightly interspersed with furze and mossy grass, clothed the ascent above them,

and covered the space below, until it reached a belt of trees growing out to the very edge of the estate, and overshadowing the rocky barriers, which in blowing weather, were heard battling with the flood below. As they passed along, the deer started from their recumbent position to herd together in small groups and stare at the intruders on their solitudes; then retreating to the path below, whose sinuosities were visible through the belt of firs which it threaded, they gambolled onwards, an antler being visible occasionally through the scattered underwood.

Presently Charlotte paused, and looking round, as if to discover some object, said, "Where is my pet? I don't see him. Captain Croiser, I'll shew you my pet;" then producing a gold whistle, suspended round her neck, she applied it to her lips, which, till then, would have been deemed inadequate to send forth such shrill tones, however aided by mechanical art. Presently a loud heavy tramp was heard—"Marengo! Hey, Marengo! here!" cried Charlotte. Obedient to that sweet and well-known voice, a horse was instantly seen rushing down the declivity.

"For God's sake take care! he will crush you to

atoms!" exclaimed Croiser, fearing lest the animal would alight on Charlotte. The latter merely smiled and remained still, while the palfrey having approached within a few feet, cleared the path on which they stood, by leaping over their heads and alighted below, taking a sweep round to lose its impetus, and then caracolling with the wild joyousness of freedom until it arrived at the side of its mistress, when it stood neighing its recognition of her person and pawing the ground with impatience, while its long tail and mane floated on the air. Gently did the noble creature bend its high arched neck and rub its beautiful forehead against the fair hand put forth to caress it, the ruddy nostril distended with pleasure.

"This is my pet—my Marengo. Is he not beautiful, Captain Croiser?"

"He is indeed superb!" and the young sailor mutely walked round the animal to admire its delicate proportions.

"Now, then, down! Marengo, down!" said Charlotte, patting her steed on the back. On the instant, the generous creature placed its fore knees on the velvet sward, at the same time crouching its hinder limbs; when its mistress standing on a

little bank above, seized a lock of its mane, and vaulted on its back, having previously taken a shawl from her neck which her sister now wrapped round her feet; and before Croiser had time to believe what he had seen, both steed and rider were dashing at full speed along the common. Surprised as he was, he yet contrived to observe something fall from the lady's neck, and advancing, found it to be the gold whistle. Having picked it up, his surprise at its strange but beautiful owner was not lessened to find by its narrow circular pipe and barrel-shaped bowl, that it had been originally intended as a boatswain's call. Taking it back to the Port Admiral, he could not help expressing some surprise as he delivered it into the old officer's hand: the latter looked at it stedfastly for a few seconds, as if contemplating an old friend. Something like a tear glistened in his venerable eye as he raised his head, and laying a forefinger gently on Croiser's arm, he said,

“ Now I'll tell you a queer story about that—yes!—When I was a youngster, in the first American war, about six months after I got my swab, I had a shipmate callad Dick Ratline—little Dick Ratline,—smartest fellow I think I ever saw in my

life; a boatswain's mate he was, a coxswain of my boat—the launch. Well, one day it was blowing great guns and marlingspikes; little Dick and I were sent off to assist some small craft which had got bilged on a reef of rocks. Its boats were stoved to shiverens, and tide rising. Well, ye see it was running such a sea, 'twas as much as ever the boat could live, and with her draft, we didn't dare attempt laying her 'longside for fear of being stove to pieces too; so what does little Dick do, but make fast to his midships a rope's end which we had brought with us, and swim under the craft's stern where they had deeper water, and could give him down the bight of the main sheet and haul him on board. Once there, he knocked down the skipper for being half-seas-over, turned to, built a rough sort of raft—got all her able hands upon it as well as himself, and we towed them every man off safe and sound to the frigate. Thus Dick saved fourteen lives. So the men clubbed together and gave him this call, which Dick laid by in lavender, and swore it should never be used till he got his boatswain's warrant, which the captain had promised to get for him the first opportunity. Well, some time after, we were on our way to the Admiral,

and Dick was as glad as a grig to think that he'd got his bit of paper at last; when one night the boats were ordered away to cut out—three of them, and I had the command. Every thing being ready, away we started. Now, before we left the ship, what does Dick do, but take his gold pipe out of lavender and sling it round him—as he said to give it a warming, but some of his messmates told me afterwards that he felt rather faint-hearted—according to his own account—and so put this on to remind him of former days—a sort of filip to do his best. We pulled in—oars muffled—to within some hundred yards say,—the enemy lying away here on our starboard bow, within a little bight of the land, when, just as we were going to separate in three parties, head, stern, and gangway, what should come athwart us but a sweeping broadside from a cursed masked battery inland. — ‘We’re discovered, boys,’ said I, ‘hurrah and close!’ and we gave way like good ones, but the battery played us so well, and surprised us so much, that we were beat off. We’d hardly got out of fire when we missed Dick, and as some one had seen him taken prisoner, it spirited the lads up to rescue our game little

bantam cock. We clapped all the wounded into the small cutter, and told them to pull in by the shore from windward, making such a row as would attract the battery, while we sneaked round and boarded her on the other side from landward. By Jove, sir, it succeeded. Dick and another who were yet standing on deck when we swept alongside, managed to get hold of something in the shape of a cutlass, or a broomstick for any thing I know, and laying into the fellows behind, with loud cries of 'Old England for ever'—egad! they thought we had boarded them on both sides. Well, sir, just when it was all over, I heard some fellow on the deck singing out my name and stooping down, there was little Dick fumbling in his breast—they'd pinned him in the scruff of the neck, poor fellow, so ye see he couldn't speak very plain, but telegraphing for me to bring my head near, he just managed to put his call-ribbon over my neck, gripe my hand in his flipper—say something like—'You—you'—and before I could say 'What cheer, my hearty?' odds bobs! he was dead as mutton! I should like to have told him that we came back for him. I know 'twould have been as good to his soul as a pint of grog,

but he forged a-head too quickly. Poor little Dick!" and the long gathering particle of moisture slid down the old veteran's cheek as he turned towards the gay creature that now came galloping towards them.

As Charlotte approached, the bonnet that had hitherto confined her hair gave way, and allowed her jetty tresses to escape, while the rapid motion of the horse caused them to stream behind. Croiser gazed on the glowing image which now presented itself before him, and sighed—a sigh prompted by the bitter experience of life—a sigh which seemed to draw from the distance of futurity the ills which but too often form a portion for the most gifted of mankind. The exercise had bestowed on her cheek an unusually bright tinge—her lustrous eyes seemed to sparkle yet more joyously than before, while the hair that strayed in glossy tangles round her, gave that native air a *deshabille* which precludes the idea of art. Her horse, as if proud of the brilliant beauty it supported, fondly tossed back its head to meet her caresses, and curvetted before their admirers with gratified vanity and delight.

Scarcely did Croiser know which to admire

most, the unsuspecting being who now appeared before him decked with all the immortality which a fallen race can know, or the extreme grace of that horsemanship which enabled her to maintain her seat without the trappings of art. Her image conveyed to his heart an idea of splendour, of vivid beauty, and awoke a feeling of surprise that he had never met with any thing to compare with her before. "And yet,"—something whispered within him—"And yet she does not realize those soft visions which have floated through my mind—which have arisen in my dreams too impalpable and indistinct even for the eye of imagination, and which nothing but a faithful memory can bring back to the cheated soul.—Oh that delicious world to which this hath no fellow! and yet—" as he beheld the gentle and sylph-like Margarita standing beside the grey steed of her sister, patting its silky coat—"and yet, how can I say so, while it contains one being such as you, soft twin? Yes, oh yes! that is the dreamy image which has so long haunted me—sufficiently present for my misery, and yet too absent for my happiness! Yes! she is the dreamy image with which, waking or sleeping, every thought of

love and joy—every relaxation from misery and care—have so warmly entwined themselves.” With an absent air he remained contemplating the placid features of Margarita, while the enraptured fancy traced in the mild lineaments before him, some faint resemblance to objects seen before, but whether in actual life, or in those waking reveries which the spirit owns—the bewildered recollection could not decide. So long did this abstraction last, that Croiser was only aroused from it by seeing the cheek he so ardently admired, suddenly veiled, as much to hide it from his gaze as to conceal the crimson flush that overspread it. Then it was that he awoke to note the paleness on Charlotte’s countenance, from which the colour had as rapidly faded, as on the features of her sister it had risen. The Port Admiral alone was unconscious of the change; for though the ladies at large owned—and they suitably acknowledged it by their favour—no gallant more devotedly their vassal, he had gradually forgotten the experience which the youthful heart alone can teach, that experience which gathers in a look the truest revelation of the soul. Nor does this skill relate

alone to love ; in that all are, more or less, sufficiently expert ; but among men in the ordinary affairs of life, I believe it is a gift—if so—one most invaluable—one whose involuntary impressions contain more truth than the most subtle, the most minute deductions of reason, as the latter has often proved to its cost ; but to return—Sir Richard stood with his hands still crossed on his breast before him, smiling with honest pride and pleasure.—“This is the most splendid animal I ever beheld—except one”—said Croiser, correcting himself and advancing to stroke its neck, “What did you call it?”

“‘Marengo’ sir;” and the altered voice, where coldness and pride were mingled for the first time, fell unpleasantly on his ear.

“‘Marengo’!—the devil, no Chatty, you sha’n’t call it any of your rascally French names—you know I hate the infernal sons of”—and here the Admiral poured forth a volley of oaths to the memory of his Gallic foemen, with a zest that was not the least conspicuous part of his truly British character. “Don’t call it by one of that rascal Boney’s victories—though I wonder how they can

be such lubbers as to let him get any—but call it by Aboukir, Chatty, where he got a good licking from Nelson, God bless him.”

“Hold your tongue, Bunting-main, she shall be called Marengo, Buonaparte for ever;” and her good-nature seeming to return with her animation, she waved aloft her switch, gave the signal to her favourite, and both were soon out of sight once more.

“There she goes, ha-ha, harum-scarum little devil. Come we must haul our head yards. Look at your watch, Margiée—half an hour behind time. Bless us and save us, what the dickens shall we say to Auntie Saff.”

They now quickened their pace, and after following the same path for a quarter of a mile, they found Charlotte and her steed pausing by a gate that inclosed the more secluded part of the plantations from the deer. Having passed this boundary, they entered upon a carriage-road sheltered by the verdant canopy above; then speedily turning to the right, through a second inclosure, they found themselves in a still more sequestered pathway, which the thick overshooting branches rendered impervious to the sun. In this deep

shadowy solitude, echo seemed to have taken up her abode, and repeated every sound that awoke upon her ear from the hidden recesses of the vast amphitheatre, around whose brink the pathway wound. There, as they gazed through its apparently interminable depths, they heard each sigh of the morning breeze softly breathed through the trees with which its circular space was filled; their sounds multiplied and increased around, and finding their way to the senses, laden with the balmy dews they had imbibed. The noble deer here gave way to the timorous watchful hare, which occasionally skipped among the retreating wilderness, rustling the decaying leaves of a former year, and leaving the disturbers far behind—oak—elm—pine—and cedar, all contributed their shade. They paused to contemplate a gigantic pollard of the first species, among whose reshooting boughs was placed a bower—the ascent to which was by a spiral stair around the root. Passing quickly forward, the increased light upon their winding path announced their approach to day once more.

“Save us,” cried the Admiral, “here comes *Margarita’s* pet now—How has he got loose, the

dog—here he comes capering along—a king's messenger, I suppose, from Aunt Saffy, to let us know that she's waiting breakfast." This speech caused Croiser to look up in alarm, as if in anticipation of beholding a second Marengo, or maybe a cub elephant by way of a change; instead of which a young gazelle tripped lightly by, to fawn at Margarita's feet, and then rub its silver collar against limbs that vied in beauty with its own.

Margarita did not point it out for his admiration, but he could not help observing with a secret satisfaction, the different disposition the sisters displayed in choosing their favourites. Soon the trees on their left hand gave way to a high bank, retreating to its summit, and only throwing their branches over from above. Gradually they quitted the woody amphitheatre on their right—the blue sound became visible once more, and instead of fronting St. Nicholas' Island, they found themselves almost opposite the town of Plymouth-Dock. Suddenly the road turned to the left, when they stood before the eastern front of what was once the Castle, but now bore the less ambitious title of The House.

To their present view it displayed two of the

four octagonal towers which flanked the several sides. Though the tumultuous days had passed, when it served the sovereign's cause as a fortress for King Charles, there yet gleamed forth in its turretted and warlike form, as well as the granite mullions which secured the stained glass of its Gothic windows, some reminiscences of its ancient glory, that might well awake in the breast of its owner, that generous pride of ancestry, which fittingly indulged, does honour to the human heart.

The towers at each angle rose above the body of the building, while in its centre, the square heavy keep yet retained two granite pinnacles—verdurous from age—with loop-holes in their sides—the summits of their gilded vanes reflecting the splendours of the morning sun. Stretching towards the spot where our friends now were, extended a terraced garden, in the Italian style, having interspersed among its beds and walks, large white vases of classic beauty, where grew the aloe and other plants of rarity. Centrally situated in the grass-plot, in which the flower-beds were gracefully disposed, was that solemn, but little-heeded monitor, the sun-dial.

On a spirally carved column of stone it stood, as if to remind its careless observers—that however we may cull the sweets of life, and surround ourselves with its transitory joys, Time still pursues his pace. Alike to him whether his progress be quite unheeded or diligently noted, or whether his path be over flowers or a wilderness. Within the bounds of this parterre might be found almost every flower that could delight the eye by its colour, or give pleasure to the senses by its perfume; nor least amongst the last was a small rich rose, several trees of which had been made to climb over the sphere-formed tracery which surmounted two parterres at the end of the terrace, each having in its centre an elegant and similarly wrought vase. Beyond these the garden terminated in a marble flight of steps, extending towards our party, and rounded off in a semicircle by a classic railing, with low capitals, the last upholding colossal imitations of the pine fruit, and running round the castle to its opposite flank.

On an elevation to the left of the terrace, rose a continuation of the wood through which they had passed, and which formed a grateful screen

at the back of the castle, its elm trees bending gracefully to the blast that mourned among their leafless branches in winter, or reflecting back as at present, in chrysolite hues, the beams disporting on their leaves. The walk on which our party now advanced, ran beneath these until it reached the entrance to the castle from behind.—Leaving this tract, however, they crossed the lawn to the flight of steps before mentioned, where Charlotte dismounting took the proffered arm of Croiser—with some slight hesitation—and they all ascended. Marengo, who remained outside, here put his head over the railing and neighed—Charlotte turned and waved her hand towards him.—Thus convinced that his services were no longer required, the noble creature regarded his mistress for a few seconds, slowly turned his head, and then darted off at full speed to regain those solitudes in which he was so free to range.

Before entering the house, they separated, the girls to cull flowers, the gentlemen to look on.—While thus employed, the rose-bud which Margarita had been wearing in her vest, fell to the ground, Croiser gently walking towards it picked it up, as he imagined, unseen—not so, however ;

its late owner perceived what had taken place, and gathering a fresh flower said,

“ Captain Croiser this is fresh, you had better give me my rose-bud again.”

“ I can refuse nothing from such hands—and yet allow me to keep the other ; faded flowers are best suited to my fortunes.”—The unobtrusive melancholy conveyed by the low tones in which this was uttered, caused his hearer to look up. Such a look, thought Croiser in after times, when its memory came over him like a dream of vanished youth, was a dear repayment for many woes. Nor did she lightly forget that moment—sorrow to her was never breathed unheedingly. She had too much of that feeling so visible in her arched eyebrows—that feeling which I fairly confess has puzzled my philosophy, as to whether it most soothes or embitters our passage through life—I mean—Romance; be that as it may, it is this feeling which so unequivocally elevates our kind above the brute creation.

END OF VOL. I.

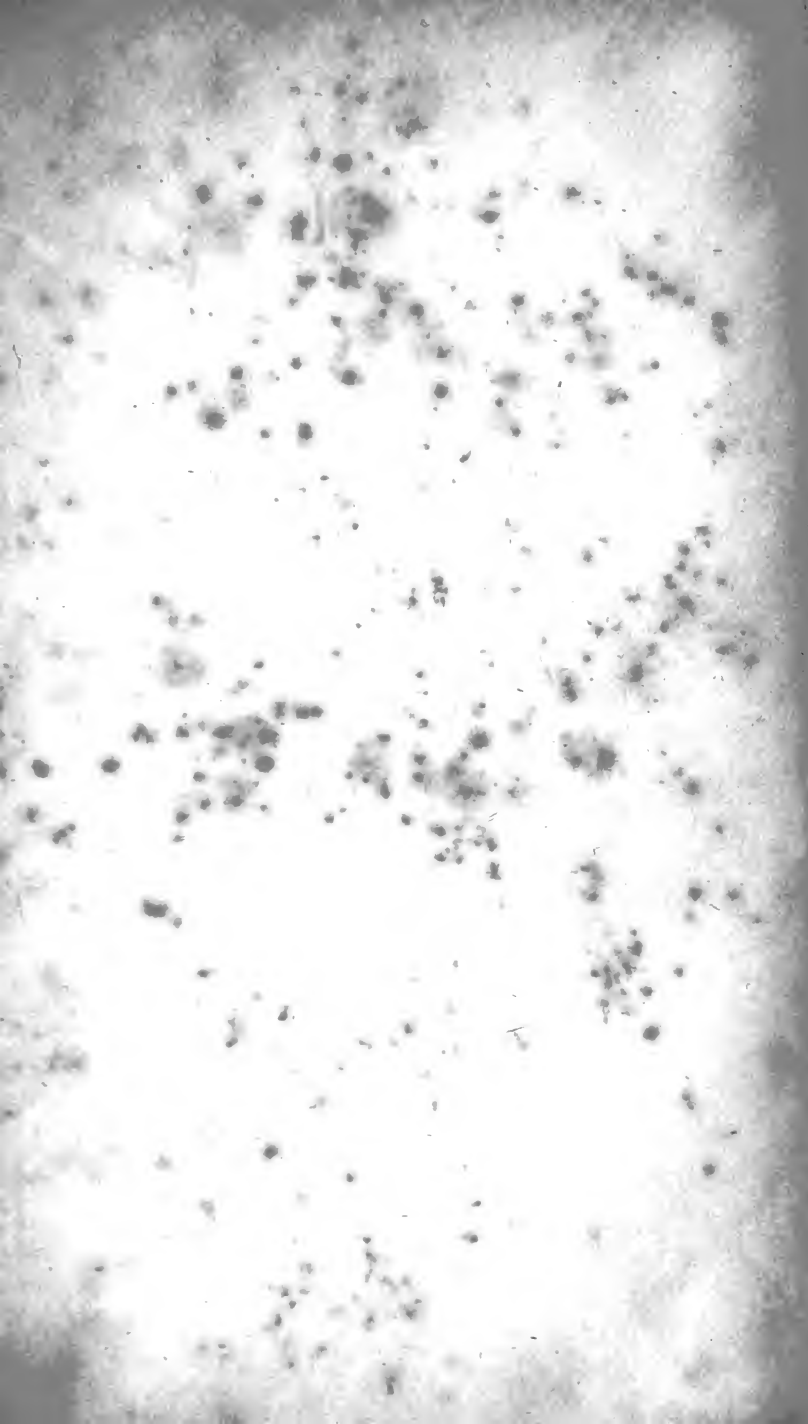
















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